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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts—March 23, 1974, 50 cents

Fairness In the News

WALTER PINCUS

Congressional Dropouts—*Paul R. Wieck*

Poorest of the Poor—*Richard Critchfield*

Old People Power—*Fred Harris*

Faulkner—*David Littlejohn*

Interview with Abba Eban

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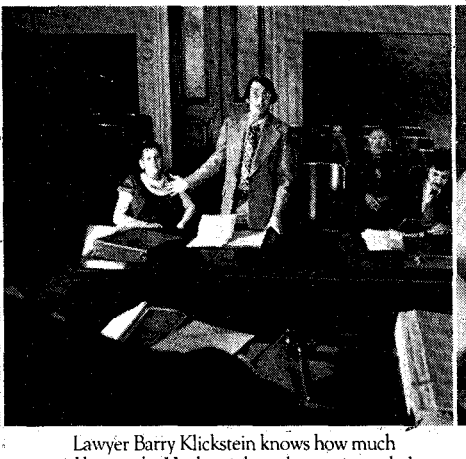

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TRB

from Washington
March 23, 1974

In the Wings

Let's try to imagine what is going on in Jerry Ford's head in all this. We sat across from him at breakfast recently; the first time in four months. A lot has changed in four months. In December impeachment was unthinkable, now we believe it will happen. Mr. Nixon's plight is horrible. It is like a whale in a school of barracuda biting out chunks of live flesh. Republicans are panicking. Gov. Sargent of Massachusetts says he had better resign. Wilbur Mills, one of the most cautious barons in the House, says he thinks he *will* resign when the facts come out on his tax abatements. The attack is deplorably unsubstantiated; and yet . . . Mills is generally right. Above all, we note the devastating oratorical use Sen. Bentsen (D) of Texas is making of Nixon's difficulties. You hear it on the radio. Bentsen has whipped his Texas crowd to a frenzy. "John F. Kennedy," he shouts, "gave a tax cut to all the American people!" The crowd yells. Then Bentsen comes down like a pile-driver. "Richard Nixon took a tax cut—for *himself!*" There is a positive blood-lust in the mob's cry. He continues, "Lyndon Johnson launched programs to improve the well-being of *all* the American people." Shouts of approval. Then he says, "This administration has set about to repeal these programs. . . ." The pile-driver hesitates and then smacks down—"and just about the only improvements we can see are—in *San Clemente* and *Key Biscayne!*"

These are ferocious arguments—personal. Can you imagine this autumn with Democratic candidates ranging the nation with attacks like that?

And so we come back to Jerry Ford. No Vice President in history, not even Thomas R. Marshall after Wilson's stroke (remember Marshall?—the man who said "What this country needs is a good five-cent cigar"?) had so difficult a role. Marshall just hibernated. Ford must go out and pretend that nothing has happened. He must say that soon things will all be normal again. He must bend down and pretend to pluck a daisy while the earth shakes.

Somewhere Jerry must relax. Maybe at home. We imagine him saying: "I must support the President—but not too much. I got burned once." Maybe it is unfair to speculate on such matters, but we can imagine his continuing, "I wouldn't say this to a soul else on earth. But the President—well, I don't see how he can last. Surely his position is eroding . . . What do I do?"

"I think you are just wonderful, Jerry!" we trust the admirable Mrs. Ford says. Ford is a meat-and-potatoes man, a decent man. He is unremarkable; a follower; not subtle; unimaginative; archconservative.

We reporters like him and ask our smiling but treacherous questions. He complains of the inquisition to which they are subjecting Mr. Nixon. But didn't Congress put him through the ropes himself when he came up for confirmation as Vice President? Oh yes, he responds, but the situation was different—in his case they were exploring his "personal integrity." Jaws drop. What in the world are the special prosecutor and the House Judiciary Committee exploring in the White House now? But we don't say it. Our silence is not due to delicacy. It is just that Jerry does not see the relationship; the obvious awful parallel. It eludes him.

He is not a subtle man. He has openness and old-fashioned civility. One thing we note: there is a lot more water between him and the White House now than in January when he made that speech charging that a "small group of activists are out to impeach the President." He has dropped that line.

Now and then he puts in a White House commercial. He is struck, he says, by how many people come up to him and tell him they are for the President! But when asked point-blank if people aren't getting the impression that Mr. Nixon has something to hide, he isn't able to finesse it, his honesty comes out: "My advice has consistently been to him to be as cooperative as possible," he says. How about that crucial day of March 21 (just a year ago) when Mr. Nixon now acknowledges John Dean told him of the cover-up; doesn't he think the President's reaction should have been stronger?

We are surprised to see him hesitate and then answer in a low voice, "I think, in retrospect, that would have been wiser."

Pressing the point, we ask Jerry Ford whether, if he had been President, he wouldn't have exposed the plot right then and there? Again we are absorbed by his low-voiced answer. "I think I would have, yes," he says.

The President is complex; the Vice President uncomplicated. He makes honest answers. Maybe too honest for a politician. He is a typical Republican of the House, which means he is to the right of the Republicans in the nation. One wonders how it would be if he were President? Any new situation, I guess, requiring imaginative adaptability would find him in trouble.

Mr. Ford goes on the attack. "If the Democrats get a smashing victory this fall and a veto-proof Congress," he says, then we would have the "wild spenders." Twice he says it would be "like the Congress of 1965-66." He says it with horror.

I look up that Congress and that election, when Johnson beat Goldwater. Republicans lost an extraordinary 36 seats in the House: the lineup in 1965 was 295 to 140. And what happened? The objective *Congressional Quarterly* wrote at the time that so many "landmark social measures passed in 1965" that they made it "one of the most productive on record." That Congress originated Medicare, passed two civil rights acts, housing acts, federal education bills: the pace was "so breathless," says the survey, "that it caused a major revision of the image" of Congress.

And what did Jerry Ford, the Republican leader, do in all this? Why he opposed. Yes, the right-wing Americans for Constitutional Action gave him a top rating on his voting index of 77 out of a possible 100 percent. In 25 years in Congress Jerry Ford has voted against food stamps, minimum wages, public housing, the OEO, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, against rent subsidies, public works and so on. His record is consistently on the side of big business at the expense of the disadvantaged. He is frank and open. He does not try to hide his belief that to have another Congress like 1965-66 would be the very worst thing he can imagine.

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Standard Operating Procedure

The President and three congressmen from California, Alphonzo Bell, James Corman and William Ketchum, are leading a campaign to open the navy oil reserve at Elk Hills to private—not public—development. Under existing law, written to prevent a repetition of Teapot Dome scandals, it can't be exploited except during a national emergency, and Mr. Nixon tells us the "crisis has passed." The last time anyone opened Elk Hills other than in wartime was during Warren Harding's administration, when the reserve was leased fraudulently to oil magnate Edward Doheny. (His leases were subsequently cancelled.) But in 1970 Mr. Nixon began promoting a plan whereby oil companies would give the government certain leases of doubtful value in the Santa Barbara Channel, some of which proved unusable after the famous blow-out that soaked the beaches with oil, and in return the government would give the companies either money or an equivalent in oil to repay their losses in Santa Barbara. Either way, fabulously rich Elk Hills was to be tapped to finance the transaction. Congress was not impressed by the plan and it was set aside. What was not set aside was the President's request for immediate authority to open Elk Hills. The navy was persuaded that an emergency exists, approved the request and passed it on to the Senate, which quickly drafted legislation.

The legislation might have been approved by Christmas if the meddlesome House Armed Services Committee hadn't interfered. Rep. Edward Hébert (D, La.), chairman of the committee, has a literal mind: no one would open Elk Hills until Hébert was convinced there *was* a national emergency. He turned over the Elk Hills proposal to a subcommittee "for study," which is to say, for burial. On March 5, however, Rep. Bell, former president of Bell Petroleum in California, and Rep. Ketchum, whose district includes Elk Hills, announced they were filing a "discharge petition" to force Hébert to release the bill. They have since been joined by about 25 cosigners, including Reps. Corman, Drinan and Conte. The petition needs 218 signatures to prevail.

Who would benefit? Consumers would barely feel the effect, for the legislation would allow production of only one percent of the amount of gasoline used each day in the United States. But the effect on California oil companies would be tremendous, the chief

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beneficiary being Standard Oil of California (Socal), the largest oil company in the state, which owns about 20 percent of the land inside the navy reserve. In 1944 Socal signed a special contract agreeing not to remove oil from its part of Elk Hills without the navy's consent; that is, only in the event of a national emergency. Socal also runs the reserve for the navy, because it owns the only pipeline in the vicinity.

When the administration wanted to trade the Santa Barbara leases for Elk Hills four years ago, Richard Kleindienst, then Deputy Attorney General, advised the White House against it. His confidential memo, released on March 7 by Rep. John Moss, shows that from the beginning both the White House and the Justice Department were aware of the flaws in the Santa Barbara deal and of Socal's monopoly position in Elk Hills. Kleindienst, writing to Robert Mayo in the budget office, pointed out that Socal had large investments in the troubled Santa Barbara Channel, and that an increase in Elk Hills production would probably damage the reserve. He described Socal's monopoly in the clearest terms: ". . . the question is whether the navy can sell the oil on the open market at a fair market price. While the navy could, of course, purport to make the oil available on arms length competitive bids, lack of opportunity for effective competition with respect to oil on the reserve would prevent establishment there of a fair market price. Standard Oil Company of California is in a controlling position with respect to such oil sales . . . Standard owns the only pipeline connected to the field, which any purchaser of Elk Hills oil must use for the first link in transportation to any refinery. The Standard line, however, is a private carrier, handling only oil owned by the company. Consequently, in order to move the oil, any purchaser must make arrangements for sale to Standard and repurchase from it at the delivery point. These factors constitute a serious limitation of the opportunity of competitors of Standard to bid."

That warning went to the White House in April 1970, but didn't stop the administration from pushing the Santa Barbara trade-off. Nor did it stop the President from approving a special contract with Shell Oil for the sale of excess oil coming out of the reserve. The government only considered two bids for that contract, tendered by Shell and Socal. They were identical.

Rep. Moss has released another batch of confidential memos that give us a glimpse of Socal's inner workings. They reveal that Socal executives in San Francisco have been trying since 1970 to find a way to tap oil pools under its property which run into the reserve. If they were tapped they would cost the navy not only oil, but extra maintenance fees paid to Socal. Most of the discussion in these memos turns on the problem of how to drill close to Elk Hills without alarming the navy or exciting the interest of its legal team. A company recommendation of June 21, 1973 says, "This play [exploratory drilling] should be given further detailed review from an operating standpoint to determine how far away from the boundary of the reserve drilling and production could be kept, and how long a time might go by before evidence of potential drainage of the reserve might become evident." A memo in July written by John Thacher, then assistant to the chairman of the Socal board, warned against drilling too close to the reserve: "I think we should exercise extreme caution before drilling locations to the south of the initial well. . . ." In another memo written just before Socal made up its mind to drill near the reserve, Thacher proposed defending the action, if challenged, by saying that the drill site at "7-R" was chosen because Socal thought it would do the least damage of several sites being considered. Thacher was overruled by the president of the company, Harold J. Haynes, who argued that Socal might want to bite deeper into the reserve later on. Socal wanted to move discreetly; it also wanted to move quickly, as one memo said, because this "could allow considerable production *before* government reacts."

The game plan was a success. With negligible exploratory and legal costs, Socal sank 10 wells next to the reserve last year and removed 1.5 million barrels of excellent crude oil before it was stopped. At the free market rate that oil was worth $15 million. After proving that the company was draining the reserve, the navy went to court and won an injunction against Socal on February 14.

Why does the President believe that Elk Hills must now be opened? As noted the bill in Congress if passed would supply only 70,400 barrels of gasoline a day in a country that demands between six and seven million barrels a day. It wouldn't lower the price of gas, because under present regulations the Elk Hills oil would be sold at the free market rate, about $10 a barrel. But it *would* help the California oil industry and some of the President's friends at Socal. They kicked in about $163,000 for his campaign in 1972.

If the Arab embargo is soon to be lifted, as reported last week, the President's rationale for quick action on Elk Hills may be rendered "inoperative." But basic decisions still have to be made. As panic subsides Congress can more coolly consider whether there are not better ways to dispose of public-owned oil than by dumping it into the tanks of the nearest monopoly. A public corporation of the sort envisioned in Sen. Adlai Stevenson's energy bill (S2506) is the appropriate instrument to explore, maintain and exploit federal oil lands. The bill, now in markup before the Senate Commerce Committee, would set up an oil and gas company that reports to but is independent of the federal government. The FOGC, as it is called, would be entitled to 20 percent of all federal oil and gas leases offered each year, and it would become the prime contractor for all work on the reserves. It would end Socal's stranglehold on Elk Hills and prevent similar monopoly exploitation at other reserves.

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Indulging in Honesty

He who risks suicide to escape being murdered is not necessarily illogical, and in certain circumstances may even be remembered with respect tinged with admiration. This lugubrious reflection is occasioned by newspaper reports at the end of February that the latest nationwide poll showed 21 percent of those questioned expressing confidence in the integrity and ability of Congress. Statistically this would seem to indicate that the 435 representatives and up to 34 senators—the number depending on how many may yet withdraw from the race—stand a 79 percent chance of being defeated. Such statistics collected eight months before the November election are notoriously erratic, but they are enough to account for the jitters in Washington. They may also account for the prevalent uncertainty among a number of incumbents about the wisdom of seeking reelection.

It is almost a sure thing that on some Day of Wrath before November, all members are going to have to run the most horrendous risk known to politics, the risk of standing up and being counted. The alternative would be to wriggle out of making any decision on Watergate, which would mean not individual but mass suicide. For honest men and even a large proportion of the crooks are being put to slow torture by that "horror," and a Congress that can end it but is too pusillanimous to do so should be kicked into oblivion by all hands, whether pro- or anti-Nixon.

So the individual member has this choice: he can vote in favor of Nixon and thereby incur the contempt of all who believe that Nixon has disgraced the presidency and smirched the good name of the country. Or he can vote against Nixon and thereby incur the resentment of every tycoon who has made a profit by a slick deal with the White House, plus the immensely larger number who really believe that any President is the Lord's anointed, and to speak a disparaging word about him is blasphemy. Since it was they who did the anointing, this means that they can detect no difference between themselves and God, the last degree of lunacy.

Since the chief target of hatred is Nixon, a Republican, and the chief target of public contempt is Congress, Democratic, the mere fact of being in office is the most perilous burden that a candidate can carry in November. It is useless to blink at the fact that it may be fatal, for this combination amounts to a swing vote that can determine any fairly close election. Why, then, should not a congressman who believes that he is in serious danger of losing his head anyhow, indulge in the luxury of voting exactly as he thinks? If he is convinced that Nixon is an innocent victim of other men's mischief, let him, if a representative, vote against impeachment, or if a senator, for acquittal. If he is convinced that Nixon has attempted to subvert the law by arrogating to himself power not granted him, and therefore has violated the oath he took at his inauguration, let him vote the other way.

Sale of The New Republic

Throughout six decades of weekly publishing *The New Republic* has had only two owners. It now has a third—Martin Peretz, lecturer on social studies at Harvard and master of one of its 12 residential colleges, who becomes chairman of the editorial board. Mr. Peretz, 34 years old, studied at Brandeis University and received his MA and Ph.D in political science from Harvard. There are no plans for altering the format, content or policies of the magazine. Its entire editorial and publishing staff, including editor-in-chief Gilbert A. Harrison, will remain. In a joint statement issued at the time of sale, Mr. Peretz and Mr. Harrison said:

"Ten years ago, on *The New Republic*'s 50th anniversary, Walter Lippmann recalled the hopes of the original editors, of whom he was one, for 'a journal of unopinionated opinion—one that would be informed, disinterested, compassionate and brave.' He went on to say that 'the paper was meant to be what it now is—the organ of no party, of no faction, of no sect, and of no cause, concerned not with liberalism and progressivism and conservatism as ideologies, but with all of them in the perspective of the tradition of civility in our Western society.' Those are our guidelines. Their vitality in our pages depends, as Herbert Croly, another of the founding editors, expressed it, upon 'the maintenance of an extremely delicate balance between being specific and being general, being aggressive and conciliatory, and being practical and visionary.' In a day when politics and culture have been debased and when 'news' is largely what the mass media say it is, we believe there is a special role for a journal which strives to be scrupulous with fact, independent of fashion, and attentive to the lessons of history."

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Why Are They Quitting?

House Dropouts

In the cloakrooms where House members retreat from the business of the hour, one hears it said repeatedly: "it's not much fun anymore." That's shorthand for the frustration and fatigue that has overcome a growing number of representatives. By mid-March, 28 had decided to call it quits at the end of this term. Ten others are seeking other offices (governor or senator). Three have already resigned. This year will probably set a record for House retirements though that point hasn't been reached yet. In 1972, 46 members retired, 30 to quit public life and 16 to seek other offices. This matched the 1952 record. The records set in 1952 and 1972 were both strongly affected by nationwide redistricting, not a factor in 1974 except in selected states such as California. If the 10 seeking other offices this year are added to the 28 quitting public life, it brings the total to 38, already close to the record of 46 though some weeks remain for additional announcements before filing dates close in all the states.

Of the 28 men and women who've announced that they are leaving this year, a dozen or more are in their prime years of service with a decade of effective work ahead, if they wanted it. They hold ranking slots on committees, aren't threatened by Watergate unless it topples every tree in the forest next fall, and are not affected by redistricting. They're just tired. And underneath, a little bitter.

The best place to start is with the workload, which in the last two decades has doubled and then redoubled and then doubled again. One retiring committee chairman, John A. Blatnik (D, Minn.), says that "60 to 70 hours a week is nothing." In his early years Congress usually adjourned by Labor Day, giving members four months to check in with their constituents and rest a bit. That era ended a decade ago; members are now lucky to get out in time to spend Christmas Eve with their families. Like many others Blatnik flies home two or three weekends a month to keep in touch with his northern Minnesota district which, in Eastern geographic terms, would stretch from suburban Silver Spring, Maryland to Hartford, Connecticut and over to Providence, Rhode Island. His constituents expect to see him around.

Rep. Edith Green (D, Ore.), retiring after 20 years, says that, "Even if there were nothing else to do but study proposed bills, and even if there were limitless funds for staff, it would be impossible—working 16 hours a day—to give all these bills the necessary attention." Only a small percentage reach the floor, but the number that do is doubling—from 351 in 1969 to 726 in 1973. During the first half of the 93rd Congress 17,528 bills were introduced, the vast majority in response to constituents.

Rep. Charles Gubser (R, Calif.), dropping out after 22 years, is "just fed up to here." When he came to Washington 15 file drawers were needed to take care of four years of work. Now 60 are needed for a single year. Rep. Martha Griffiths (D, Mich.), who's going home after 20 years, concedes that "if it were just reasonable hours and a reasonable effort, I would stay on." But she's leaving, giving up the fourth ranking spot on Ways and Means, a position she saw as "an opportunity to work for justice" in such fields as health, women's rights, pensions and welfare. "The longer you're here, the higher you go and the more difficult the job," she says. "When other men are retiring, you're taking on the heaviest burden of your career." Although she's in good health her situation isn't much different from Blatnik's. Two years ago he became chairman of Public Works (that too doubles the work of a conscientious member) and would have liked to stay on a few more years, but health forced the conclusion that the "odds are against" surviving another term or two.

The doubling and redoubling of the workload wipes out any sort of private life for conscientious members. Blatnik's son is 17, his two daughters younger. When the son was about seven "he could understand why I couldn't get home early but he couldn't understand why I had to go out to the district almost every weekend when other fathers in the neighborhood were out in the yard with their boys." During summer vacations, which Blatnik spent in the lake district of his home state, he checked in for the night. There were no leisurely, uninterrupted days with the family. Gubser of California, a hearty, outgoing man, says that if he "had found a way of getting myself some semblance of a private life, I'd go on."

The high rate of retirements is more noticeable in the House than in the Senate, probably because representatives are up for reelection every two years and subject to repeated redistricting. They can never stop campaigning, and if their district is substantially altered they have to spend a great deal of time getting acquainted with a new constituency. Rep. Griffiths notes that several large delegations have been redistricted almost every two years. Another round of recarving, this time by the courts, has prompted the retirement of two veteran California members—Republican William Maillard, newly named ambassador to the Organization of American States, and Democrat Chet Holifield, chairman of Government Operations, who was thrown into a district with another Democratic incumbent: the district belonged to the other man.

Beneath the fatigue, contributing to it, is an overpowering sense of being hemmed in. Rep. Howard Robison (R, NY) first came to public attention as one of the "young turks" a decade or so back and is now well up on the GOP side of Appropriations. He's quitting at 59 with 17 years in Congress behind him: "I'm frus-

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trated with the inability to move the system. After a while you start to question whether this country is governable under our system. It comes down to leadership." Robison is convinced we don't have any leadership in the White House or the Congress. He worries about President Nixon's loss of "the moral imperative he needs to lead the country, the sort of thing that embodies trust, that means people believe him when he says something, whether they like it or not." The House? He shrugs: "If they just had a position, it wouldn't be so bad. They don't."

When she first came to Congress, Martha Griffiths saw "a rather simple society around us." But society, and with it the laws, have become increasingly complex. A great deal of basic information is needed to deal with the complexities. She found herself spending many a weekend on the road, holding hearings to find out what's happening in welfare, in women's rights, in health. "Congress needs to computerize information," she says; it can't rely on the executive, regardless of party: "They all lie to us, but the people around here are too cowardly to do anything about it." Theoretically the Library of Congress is a resource for the legislative branch; but House staff members often complain that the library simply relays queries to executive departments "downtown."

Gubser calls Congress "the national hitching post. When I came here 22 years ago, people lobbied you. Now they fill the halls. There's so much hate in it that wasn't there a few years back. If you don't do what they want, they threaten to defeat you. Public policy is now being influenced by coalition groups. They're mean and nasty." Rep. Green made the same point in a recent speech before the Portland City Club when she took aim at one of the country's folk heroes: "Ralph Nader has made some real contributions in certain areas. As I see it, this does not justify unlimited confidence in every release—on almost every subject from car safety to tussock moth—to the Alaskan pipeline to congressional profiles—put out by Nader's Raiders and his offshoot organizations." She's angry about "citizen's lobbies" which "clothe their positions in the mantle of pure public good . . . A sound public interest is good; an interest based on emotion putting out horrendous misinformation is not helpful to the legislative process—whether it be a church lobby or an oil lobby."

Rep. Julia Butler Hansen (D, Wash.) is giving up her powerful position as chairman of the House Interior appropriations subcommittee. She's had enough: "I was bathing my son when he was a baby and an irate constituent showed up and told me in no uncertain terms to drop him because she needed and demanded my time." Hansen has been in public office 37 years, "a long time to be pursued by an endless string of people who want everything from post offices to gasoline, a long time to receive telephone calls on Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve from the United Press or Associated Press." Now she's going "to do as I please, hang up the telephone or take the damn telephone off the hook and when people I don't know appear at my door and walk in without knocking, I'll have the great opportunity of telling them it is my private home."

The men and women in Congress enjoy politics; they wouldn't be there if they didn't. After all, there's the honor of the position. Today, however, they're not so sure about the honor. A recent Harris poll gave Congress a 21 percent favorable rating compared to 69 percent negative, a drastic decline from the halcyon days of the 89th Congress when the ratings soared to 70-plus. Of course the ratings reflect the mood of the country, which the members understand if they don't share. Then too, the Watergate scandals have seriously affected public confidence not only in the White House but in all branches of government. The cloakrooms are full of whispered alarm over the mail. GOP members are getting letters from constituents saying, "I've always supported you but never again." It's also hitting the Democrats. One Democratic congressman who got over 80 percent of the vote in his district in 1972 says, "Nothing we do is right. A lot of us are questioning whether we want to put up with the abuse." Rep. Morris K. Udall (D, Ariz.) says that his mail frightens him: "You have to take all this irrational hate and fear," he says.

Congress adjourned last December just in time to get home for Christmas. Back home, the members were besieged with complaints about regulations of the Cost of Living Council—on propane, fertilizer, bailing wire, gas. The bailing wire shortage is illustrative. Only three domestic firms produce bailing wire, the flood of cheap wire from Japan in recent years having wiped out eight others. The price of bailing wire was frozen; the price of scrap iron from which it's made wasn't. Nor were restraints put on exports, nor were controls put on other products that could be made from bailing wire. Result: no bailing wire. Last fall farmers and ranchers lost millions in crops because of it. The solution seemed simple but it took months, countless hours of the time of members of Congress and three separate rulings by the Cost of Living Council (one for each of the three firms) to straighten it out. "They legislate a thousand times more every day in the agencies

NEXT WEEK: Spring books—with reviews by John Deedy, Jonathan Yardley, J. D. O'Hara, Charles Shapiro, John A. Avant

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than we do in the Congress in a year," Gubser says. And the intent of Congress is often missing from the regulations that finally come out.

"I've always prided myself on my patience," says Rep. Robison. "I saw myself as a sounding board. During the Vietnamese conflict, I met with students regularly. Now I find myself losing patience with my constituents, flaring back at them. It's a sign that the job's getting to me." He'd like to see "a sabbatical of sorts, a time to get away from the pressure cooker, to recharge the physical and mental batteries. I've begun to feel almost as lost as my constituents." He suggests revising the schedule: three weeks of a month in Washington, one at home.

What I haven't mentioned is that now there's real incentive to retire—a vastly improved pension system. Few congressmen save much, if anything, on $42,500 salary. Most of them, those without private means, have to pinch pennies to put their children through college. Robison is open about it: "I haven't saved a nickel while I've been in Congress . . . Except for retirement, I wouldn't have what I'd have had if I'd stayed home in a country lawyer's office."

When this year's primaries get underway, the involuntary retirement rate may go higher as voters, annoyed by Watergate, shortages, inflation, strike out—wisely or blindly. If that happens, Washington will see a lot of young, fresh faces, something Robison thinks is all to the good. And for the select group who are high up but are leaving voluntarily, there's a reward: "Ever since I decided to retire," Robison says, "people couldn't be nicer to me if I'd died."

Paul R. Wieck

Fighting Agism

Old People Power

The other evening Walter Cronkite said that Oregon's Gov. Tom McCall could not succeed himself and that the governor's 85-year-old mother, Dorothy McCall, had announced as a candidate. We laughed, then wondered why. There would have been no laughter if Cronkite had said that the governor's 28-year-old son (if he has one) was going to run. It's that Mrs. McCall is 85!—at which age Justice Holmes was a mighty fine associate justice of the Supreme Court.

It used to be that gay people would almost die before publicly admitting their sexual predilections. And a white civil rights advocate would throw a fit if his or her daughter started dating a black man. This wasn't because the gay person or the civil rights advocate thought there was something inherently evil about homosexuality or miscegenation, but because they honestly recognized that society frowns on such things. Then organized groups set out to change society's attitude. Could that be what's going to happen with old people? I think so. "The dominant society in America systematically discriminates against us on jobs and promotions," a friend of mine said to me recently. "We are frequently objects of derision, often treated like simple children. What we need are group pride and power." She was talking about *agism*.

In the 1960s there was a youth bulge in our population that we should have seen coming; birth statistics and grade school enrollment figures were matters of public record. Crime is higher in the lower age brackets, but we were unprepared for the rise in crime that accompanied the rise in the numbers of young people. Nor were we prepared for their predictable demands. We can learn something from that experience. Young people are *held* out of power; old people are *forced* out of power. Both are difficult to organize: students graduate every few years, old people die. But when the youth bulge moved up to the adolescent years and beyond, a kind of critical mass was reached. Young people developed their own dress, hair styles, music, issues, their own heroes and their own values. "Youth was always a trendy age, but never like in the 1960s," Jack Newfield wrote.

Today, as Columbia sociologist Amatai Etzioni has pointed out, declining birth rates and longer lifespans are changing the average age and the age percentages in our population. Thirty percent of us are under the age of 15, 10 percent over 65. Etzioni says that the average, now 28, may before long be 40. Will old people develop their own styles? Probably so, at least to the extent of becoming less self-conscious about aging; many will flaunt it. Generations of black people once went to all kinds of trouble to straighten their hair because it was drummed into them that everybody was supposed to look like the people in the Breck and Brylcreem advertisements. Now with black pride, the "natural" is almost a badge of honor for blacks.

The cure for powerlessness is power. And when old people become aware that there is power in their numbers, something is going to give. The National Council of Senior Citizens in Washington is gaining in lobbying strength and aggressiveness. A 68-year-old woman in Philadelphia, Margaret Kuhn, has put together an activist old people's group called the Gray Panthers. Margaret Kuhn advocates senior pride and power though she doesn't like the word "senior." "Old" is the right word, she says. "Being old in our society is bad news," she continues. "It's so bad for so many of us that we deny our age and do foolish things like dyeing our hair, getting our faces lifted and hating the fact that we have to slow down a bit. I think we should wear our gray hair, wrinkles and crumbling joints as badges of distinction. After all, we

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worked damn hard to get them."

As old people become better organized, we will hear the inevitable question: what in the world do *those people* want? And the answer will come back, as it did from blacks, from young people and from women: the same things *you* want, a little dignity and more power over our own lives. Old people are going to step up demands for patient rights under Medicare and in the nursing homes, for tenant rights in housing for the elderly. They are going to insist that the government stop designing programs for old people that turn out to be more to the advantage of the purveyors of the services than the beneficiaries.

An old man in a high-rise housing project for the elderly in Miami says that with cataracts on both eyes he can no longer shop and cook for himself. "Why can't I take my food stamps and buy prepared food at a restaurant?" he asks. Well, why can't he? Better still, why can't he have the money instead of the food stamps? An old woman in the same high-rise project says that her main problem is that she is lonely. There are no stores or centers for human contact within walking distance. She resents all the fake hoopla of the hired recreation director and the children's games he organizes. She resents the taboo in the project and in society generally against romance among old people. She doesn't like being segregated, she doesn't like being directed, pitied and patronized. That Miami high-rise was subsidized by the federal government, much of the subsidy going to the well-to-do builder. The operation of the project is also government subsidized. What about giving the old people the money directly, so they could pay for that kind of housing, if they wanted it. Or they could live on their own and pay someone to come in to help. Or they could live with a son or daughter and help with the bills.

Eleven million old people in America have incomes below the government's standard of what it costs for an old person to live—$5200 for a couple, $2860 for a single person. The government could change those figures in a week. Social security benefits and welfare payments could be increased. The Congress did pass an 11 percent increase in 1973, but old people are going to want more. They are tired of standing still economically, which is all they've been doing. Rising prices hit them hardest.

Can we afford all this? Some worry that zero population growth will mean a stagnant economy with more and more idle old people living off the workers. But there is reason for hope in the fact that more and more old people are going to be striking out against *forced* idleness. People are living longer, and the retirement tradition in America no longer comports with biology. Compulsory retirement will be knocked out, perhaps in the courts. Social security and welfare payments will come to be regarded as annuities to which old people are entitled as a matter of right. There will be no reduction in checks just because old people earn money by working, if they can. The definition of "work" will have to be changed to include occasional counseling and advising, and there will be compensation for that, and rightly so.

Fred Harris

Mr. Harris *is former United States senator from Oklahoma.*

The Right of Reply

Fairness in the News

by Walter Pincus

In 1913 the Florida legislature passed a fair campaign practices statute, one section of which required a newspaper to print the reply of any political candidate whose character or record in office had been "assailed" or who had been charged in an article in its pages with malfeasance or misfeasance. In the intervening 61 years the law has been invoked only twice—in 1971 and again in 1972. Both times county circuit court judges threw the cases out on the ground that Florida's right-to-reply law violated the First Amendment and was thus unconstitutional. On July 10, 1973, however, the Florida Supreme Court by a six-to-one vote reversed the county judge in the second case and held that the statute *was* constitutional. It ordered a trial on the merits of the case. The Florida court thus espoused some basic tenets of a growing number of

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public officials who want to require newspapers to publish responses of individuals who have been attacked in print.

Sen. John McClellan last month took to the Senate floor to say that if the US Supreme Court upholds the state decision, "the Senate might wish to give careful study and consideration to the possibility of enacting a national law similar to the Florida statute." President Nixon is of the same mind: changes in the law are needed "to reaffirm certain private rights of public figures so that people interested in running for public office can have greater assurance of recourse against slanderous attacks on them or their families." The Justice Department is now studying the matter.

"The right of the public to know all sides of controversy," the Florida court majority stated, "and from such information to be able to make an enlightened choice is being jeopardized by a growing concentration of the ownership of the mass media into fewer hands, resulting ultimately in a form of private censorship. Through consolidation, syndication, acquisition of radio and television stations and the demise of vast numbers of newspapers, competition is rapidly vanishing and news corporations are acquiring monopolistic influence over huge areas of the country. Freedom of expression was retained by the people through the First Amendment for all the people and not for a select few. The First Amendment did not create a privileged class, which through a monopoly of instruments of the newspaper industry would be able to deny to the people the freedom of expression which the First Amendment guarantees." Florida's right-to-reply statute, they wrote, "enhances rather than abridges freedom of speech protected by the First Amendment. . . ."

The issues raised merit serious reflection by the news media and are not to be disposed of by hasty retorts that freedom of the press in this case is threatened by a handful of elected state judges who have it in for the newspaper that has been investigating *them.*

Most American cities are down to one daily newspaper; only a handful have two or more with separate ownership. Unlike colonial days when the First Amendment was drafted, starting up a new newspaper or successful pamphleteering has become next to impossible. Moreover radio and television stations in many one-newspaper cities now provide the multiplicity of information and opinion that once came only from the daily press. It is an ironic development, for under the Federal Communications Commission's "fairness doctrine," government regulated broadcasters already are obliged to recognize a right to reply. Why? Because broadcast frequencies are limited and of necessity allocated by government. The Supreme Court ruled in 1969 that, the First Amendment notwithstanding, broadcasters can be required to make time available to an individual who's been personally attacked on the air.

The Florida decision and the current right-to-reply drive have to be looked at against the background of a 1964 case in which the Supreme Court all but did away with the libel law as it affects printed comment about public figures. The Court held that a government official could not successfully sue for damages for a printed defamatory statement—even if false—unless the official could prove the newspaper did so maliciously, knowing it was false, or with reckless disregard for the statement's truth or error.

Concern that the people get all points of view, fear of growing media monopolies and a belief that newspapers may be too negligent about checking the accuracy of their information—these are what the Florida newsmen should have considered before reacting to the Florida case. They did not. The Miami Herald Publishing Company, whose newspaper was involved in the reversed decision, dealt only with what it saw as a simple First Amendment invasion. Its lawyers first moved for a rehearing before the Florida Supreme Court. When that was denied they appealed to the US Supreme Court, and on January 14 of this year that Court agreed to hear the case. Oral arguments will probably be heard late next month. Unfortunately for those interested in serious debate of this complex issue, the *Miami Herald* case comes to the high court in a simplistic form, with part of the record missing.

The information before the court is as follows: an editorial in the *Miami Herald* of September 20, 1972 sharply attacked Pat L. Tornillo, Jr., a candidate for the Democratic nomination in a Florida state legislature primary election two weeks away. After discussing Tornillo's remark about one of his opponents, the *Herald* editorial concluded: "We cannot say it would be illegal but certainly it would be inexcusable of the voters if they sent Pat Tornillo to Tallahassee." For eight days Tornillo made no direct response to the *Herald* about the editorial. Then on the morning of September 28—five days before the election—he called the newspaper and announced he would be there at noon with his attorney. On arrival Tornillo produced a reply to the editorial and asked the *Herald* to print it or risk the criminal and civil penalties attached to the 1913 right-to-reply statute. Faced with this ultimatum the *Herald* refused and went ahead with a second anti-Tornillo editorial that already had been scheduled. The second editorial, like the first, didn't mince words. It appeared September 29—four days before the election. Tornillo was characterized as a man who wanted the legislative seat to get more money and more power. That same day Tornillo came to the *Herald* with a second reply and again, citing the law, demanded it be published. He was again refused and thereupon went into court for an order instructing the *Herald* to print his replies—as required by law—and pay civil damages. The day before the election,

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a hearing was held on Tornillo's suit. The Florida attorney general refused to support the law, terming it unconstitutional, and the suit was dismissed. Tornillo appealed and the Florida Supreme Court came down on his side.

The only facts before the Florida Supreme Court—and thus the only ones now before the Supreme Court—relate to the two editorials and the two unprinted replies. On the basis of this limited information, the Florida justices reached their conclusion about the public's receiving only one point of view—the publisher's—and the influence of monopoly, or in the case of the *Herald*, the influence of a dominant newspaper in one city. What was absent were other facts pointing in an opposite direction.

Besides being a candidate, Tornillo was executive director of a local teachers' union. In prior years he had frequently clashed with the *Herald* as a union spokesman and was often the subject of critical news stories and editorials. Before the 1972 election campaign, Tornillo frequently wrote the paper in response to attacks; many of his letters were published. During the campaign the activities of Tornillo were reported in the news columns of the *Herald*, his statements were quoted. He took out paid ads in the *Herald* that gave readers his views. The *Herald* printed news stories about the suit Tornillo brought against the

The *Herald* comes out in the morning; the *Miami News* is the evening paper. Under an agreement reached after Congress approved the Failing Newspaper Act, which relaxed antitrust restrictions as applied to newspapers in the same city, the *News* was printed on *Herald* presses and the two papers set up a common business department. This relationship is cited in one Tornillo court brief as an example of the *Herald*'s dominance and the way in which the newspaper benefits from federal government "largesse," while resisting any government requirements on what is to be printed. The *News*, however, not only had its own separate coverage of the 1972 Florida campaign, giving Tornillo's views, but came out editorially in support of Tornillo. A limited survey of Miami television and radio stations indicate they also gave some play to Tornillo's candidacy.

The day after the election the *Herald* editorially congratulated Miami voters for defeating Tornillo. Tornillo replied in a letter to the editor, and since it was *not* accompanied by a legal demand that it be printed, it was.

Was Tornillo's access to Miami voters cut off by monopolistic news media? Was the voters' opportunity to "make an enlightened choice"—as suggested in the Florida decision—jeopardized by the *Herald*'s refusal to print Tornillo's two responses? Or did he try to create a last-minute campaign issue by breaking with his previous practice of sending a letter to the editor, instead insisting on his legal right to space? Since the *Miami Herald* case in county court never turned on such questions, the answers were never sought. As a result the US Supreme Court may decide an important issue of press access on the basis of quite limited evidence.

Setting the *Herald* controversy aside, how can the real problems posed by the Florida decision be met? Prof. Jerome Barron, counsel for Tornillo and advocate of right-to-reply legislation, maintains that the 1964 Supreme Court decision on libel has encouraged irresponsible press attacks on individuals. He believes that unless some new approach is developed "to require opportunities for the public figure to reply to a defamatory attack, the [1964] decision will merely serve to equip the press with some new and rather heavy artillery which can crush as well as stimulate debate." President Nixon wraps *his* desire for some change in libel law in his "concern . . . to eliminate the danger of slander or libel as a deterrent to seeking a public career." It is an approach that is congenial to many politicans who at some time or another have been victimized by harsh or inaccurate reporting.

No one, however, has yet come forward with a convincing example of "a defamatory attack" that crushed debate or a public career. Tornillo was subjected to sharp press criticism but had media coverage and even press endorsement. Mr. Nixon has reason to want to blunt press attacks, and yet much of the White House criticism of the Watergate coverage has been, on balance, more slanderous and defamatory than the news stories to which the President objected. Could it be that some critics of the press are more interested in inhibiting adverse reporting and comment than in correcting press irresponsibility where it occurs?

No sensible person would claim there is never any unremittingly malicious news coverage. It is my impression that malice of this sort is most likely to be found in smaller one-newspaper cities and towns where media monopolies do dominate. Would right-to-reply laws help in such situations? Probably not, for as Florida Supreme Court Justice J. Boyd noted in his dissent on the *Miami Herald* case, "Almost everyone whose name has been carried frequently in the news media has been offended at one time or another by stories or comments in which he disagrees." To give them space automatically, Justice Boyd said, would either flood the newspaper with replies or discourage the paper from printing critical stories, analyses or editorials.

If legislation is no answer, what can publishers themselves do to satisfy legitimate criticism? First, as has been noted before in these pages, media monopoly must be recognized and dealt with. Newspapers should voluntarily begin to divest themselves of radio-television properties in the same towns, before court rulings or legislation force such action. Newspapers should aggressively seek out spokesmen for opposing points of view on major issues, local and

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national, and present them in a professional setting—not thrown together in some expanded letters column but perhaps in the "op-ed" format pioneered by *The New York Times*. Recognition that newspapers have become monopoly news sources in most cities is no excuse, however, for not reporting fully or frankly or not editorializing about controversial matters. If the American press is to be criticized, it is for being too timid rather than too aggressive in its treatment of national and local government affairs.

Finally, the press should pay more attention to self-criticism. The public wants and deserves to know what makes news and why, why stories are covered and how they are put together. Columnist Joseph Kraft's recent suggestion that some Washington coverage of the Watergate grand jury's secret findings was intrusive is a good example of salutary self-criticism. But it points up another problem. Reporters, editors and publishers have their biases. The best and worst investigative reportage is done by journalists seeking to right what they're convinced is a wrong. It was not chance alone that made *The Washington Post*—already cool to Nixon—the paper that probed longest and most deeply into Watergate, and not, say *The New York Daily News*. But here Kraft's criticism comes into play. He believes justice *is* now being done and the press should not do anything to obstruct it. On the other hand, a pro-Nixon newsman, if he believes the grand jury is being misused to injure the President, should feel free to seek evidence to prove such a point.

Journalists are active players on the public stage, like it or not. There is no requirement that every bit of information they obtain must be printed or broadcast. The decisions have to be made with great discrimination, the primary consideration in the last analysis being the public good as serious newsmen—from their diverse political and economic perspectives—see it. A 1946 Supreme Court decision summed it up: ". . . the public function which belongs to the press makes it an obligation of honor to exercise this function only with the fullest sense of responsibility. Without such a lively sense of responsibility a free press may readily become a powerful instrument of injustice."

Foreign Aid

Helping the Poorest of the Poor

by Richard Critchfield

The kaleidoscope of international development has been given such a violent shake by astronomical oil, food and fertilizer prices that a wholly new approach to foreign aid is certain to be formulated in the coming year. What used to be, as late as last October, the poor two-thirds of the planet's 163 nations, is now redefined into three distinct categories:

► The 11 members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) who will benefit from the very substantial net transfer of $50 to $100 billion a year from the industrialized world and poor-country oil importers. With a population of 260 million, they include Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, Iraq, Nigeria, Algeria, Venezuela, Indonesia, Libya, Qatar and Abu Dhabi. While they still need Western technical assistance, they no longer require financing on concessional terms, *i.e.*, foreign aid, but will join the donor countries.

► Developing countries that are either self-sufficient in oil or have other major exportable raw materials whose prices have also soared. Colombia, Tunisia, Mexico and Bolivia fall into the first group and Brazil, Malaysia, Zambia and Zaire into the second. There is also a third group, including South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore, which has prospered in recent years through the processing of goods. These countries import much energy—South Korea's oil bill alone may rise an additional $500 million in 1974—but they may be able to add much of the extra cost to their manufactured exports. Providing a global recession is avoided, these countries, with access to currency markets and export credits, should be able to adjust

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RICHARD CRITCHFIELD *has spent the past 15 years reporting development in the poor countries; his most recent book,* The Golden Bowl Be Broken *(Indiana University Press, January 1974) portrays the impact of overpopulation on an Arab Bedouin, African fisherman, Indian farmer and Indonesian urban migrant.*

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to higher oil, food and fertilizer prices. They too should require no more foreign aid.

China, that marvelous mystery of 800 million people who don't seem to use anything, is in a class by itself. It began to export oil in 1971, is now up to 100,000 barrels a day, may earn more than $200 million from oil exports this year and has the offshore reserves in the China Sea to become a significant producer and member of OPEC. Peking would first have to make deals with Korea and Japan, which have made conflicting concessions, and invite to undertake its offshore drilling one of the 28 international oil companies, probably one of the seven majors – Exxon, Gulf, Standard Oil of California, Texaco, Mobil, British Petroleum and Royal Dutch Shell. But if lucky on oil, China is still vulnerable on food. It already rivals India as the world's largest fertilizer importer and its grain imports in 1974 are expected to reach nine million tons at a cost of over one billion dollars. This compares with 1972's food imports of five million tons costing $345 million.

► This leaves the earth's 30 poorest countries, which lack oil, fertilizer and food and the money to import them. Events since October 1973 have had an overwhelmingly negative impact on them. Almost all are in South Asia (India, Bangladesh, Ceylon), tropical Africa or the Central American-Caribbean area; together their populations total more than one billion or about a quarter of the earth's four billion people. (The United Nations estimates the earth's population will not reach four billion until early 1975 and five billion by 1985, but some demographers believe this is conservative.) Development economists estimate these 30 countries will need an additional two to three billion dollars a year for the next few years if they are to avoid bankruptcy, famine and social breakdown.

According to estimates made by the Overseas Development Council in Washington, DC, the cost of energy, mostly oil, for all the developing nations has risen at least $10 billion and the cost of food and fertilizer at least five billion dollars over 1972. In a paper published this month the council's director, James P. Grant, says it may be necessary, to avoid a global recession, to transfer back to the non-oil exporting countries some $12 to $15 billion a year in addition to the present flow of investment and aid now running about eight billion dollars a year. Grant believes some two-thirds of the $12 to $15 billion can be transferred on commercial or near commercial terms through the International Monetary Fund, expanded World Bank loans, increased medium-term export credits and the Eurocurrency markets. Grant proposes that "several billion dollars" more be supplied the 30 poorest countries on highly concessional terms, that debts be rescheduled and new technical assistance be supplied. He also proposes that an investment of $15 billion be made over the next six years in fertilizer production. The limits of the world's existing capacity have now been reached. As of this moment there is no fertilizer whatsoever available on the world market at any price and urea, the most popular nitrogen fertilizer, now costs $250 a ton compared with $70 a ton in 1972. Greatly expanded fertilizer production would benefit not only the needy countries but manufacturers of fertilizer plants in the United States. (Fertilizer is produced from natural gas, which is always found with oil, but can also be found in "nonassociated" deposits such as in the Netherlands and Pakistan.)

Some of the concessional financing for the 30 poorest countries should obviously come from the capital surplus oil-producing countries, but this would require a strong US lead. Ideas of a two-tier price structure for oil, with the poor countries getting it cheap, have been ruled out by the OPEC members. But barter deals between the poor countries and the oil states are still being discussed and so are soft loans (aid), although the Arabs have a fairly good case that they do not have as great an obligation to the world's poor as do the US, Europe and Japan, which depend much more on poor country raw materials and markets.

Fully four-fifths of the new oil revenue to the Arab OPEC members will accrue to Saudi Arabia, Libya and the Gulf states, with 10 percent of the population of the 18 Arab nations between them. Even if the increased oil revenues were spread evenly throughout the Arab world, the resultant average gross national product of $780 a head would compare with the 1971 figures for America of more than $5000 or for Britain and Japan of between $2000 and $2500. The Arab economy is still very small beside the combined wealth of the members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the average living standard in the Arab countries is still pitifully low. Before October Indonesia had an average per capita GNP of only $80 and Nigeria of $120; even if these now rise an average of $20 per head these two OPEC members remain two of the world's poorest countries.

So far Arab oil states have extended sizable grants and credits to other Arab nations for political purposes, created a $300 million Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and a $125 million Fund for African Development. This is meager measured against the need. Preferably some OPEC nation surplus capital could be channeled back to the 30 poorest countries through the IMF and World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank which, unlike the OPEC countries, have the administrative capacity to handle it.

But if the Arabs are to be generous with oil, the US may first have to set an example with food. For the past 60 days the Agency for International Development has been unable to obtain any wheat for PL480 programs, even at $5.50 a bushel. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy has proposed at least 10 percent of US grain

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surpluses be set aside to supply famine relief and concessionally priced food for the poorest countries. There is growing support for an international food reserve, a probable main topic at the coming World Food Conference in Rome this November, as well as at the World Population Conference in Bucharest in August, both scheduled in a critical year of food scarcity in the poorest, most overpopulated countries.

As is often said the energy crisis is really a food crisis and if mass starvation faces a billion or so of the earth's people in 1974 or 1975, some trade-off between energy and food seems inescapable. The problem can be put simply. A year from now there will be four billion humans. At the same time finite reserves of fossil fuels are being rapidly depleted. Yet the only way to feed four billion people is by growing new, dwarf, hybrid strains of wheat, rice and corn that can double or triple yields provided enough fresh water and nitrogen fertilizer is used. For example an acre in the US that produced 34 bushels of corn in 1945 now produces 81 bushels but only because the nitrogen fertilizer supplied has increased from seven pounds to 112 pounds. Modern agriculture is energy intensive. Moreover fertilizer is not a by-product. You either get the 81 bushels of corn or 88 gallons of gas, not both.

High-technology American agriculture is already so modernized that it is extremely expensive to further increase yields. This is not true in the poor countries. The really big ones—India, China, Bangladesh, Indonesia—all have very low present agricultural productivity. A relatively small investment in irrigation, the new high-yielding seeds and fertilizer really pay off. Most agronomists estimate that with the needed inputs and technological know-how, India, China, Bangladesh, Indonesia and the other heavily populated poor countries could all double their food output within 10 to 20 years. So the long-term prospects are not so hopeless as they may look at the moment.

But since 45 percent of the 30 poorest countries' populations are now under 15 years of age, nothing but mass starvation and epidemics of disease can prevent the earth's population from reaching eight billion in 24 years. Population control in the past few years has succeeded among the white Europeans and the Japanese and has begun to succeed among the Chinese but not among the Indo-Malay, black African or Latin peoples. Compulsory birth control in parts of East Java and a twice-yearly contraceptive injection in northern Thailand even at the risk of cancer are probably the kind of thing the poorest countries will increasingly be forced to resort to. But any real decline in fertility will take some years.

In the meantime on top of everything else, the earth's climate is experiencing the greatest shift since 1700. Generally the earth is getting slightly colder. More seriously the equatorial zones are getting wetter and the arid and semi-arid inland zones north and south of the equator are getting drier. This has heightened the dangers of disastrous floods and droughts as seen in 1972 and 1973 in the Philippines, Pakistan, the African Sahel, India and elsewhere. Such floods and droughts are made much worse by deforestation of mountainsides, overgrazing and overcultivation by the furiously multiplying populations. Worst of all meteorologists have started warning that the Great Plains of the US and Canada—the earth's one really big surplus food-producing region—is overdue for the kind of drought that turned it into the Dust Bowl of the 1930s.

The US already has committed its last reserve—50 million acres once in the "soil bank"—to increase food production for the first time since the 1950s. Yet so great is the present world food scarcity that global reserves, in 1961 about 220 million tons or enough to feed the entire world population for three months, will fall to 105 million tons by midsummer, only enough to keep 1974's population fed for 29 days.

There is no longer any wheat or rice surplus for PL480 food loans, since the 1950s the main form of US concessional aid. The main multilateral form, soft loans from the International Development Association, the World Bank subsidiary, may also have come to an end. The House of Representatives voted to kill funds for IDA by 248 to 155 in late January. The strategy is now to try to carry IDA's funding in the Senate and then go back to the House. If this fails and IDA collapses at a time PL480 is being phased out, the whole weave of international development cooperation could come undone at the worst possible moment. For instance, India's AID program, formerly one billion dollars a year, was recently closed down on the assumption such assistance could be continued through an international mechanism, and just weeks before India's oil import bill rose at least one billion dollars a year, an amount India cannot even remotely begin to pay. The first regular foreign aid authorization bill to pass in the last three years just squeaked through Congress late last year—in the Senate by a narrow 44-41 vote and in the House 210-193—and then only after major reform with the old categories of technical and development loans and grants being replaced by new ones emphasizing nutrition, health, education, job-creating investment in farms and factories, population control and decentralized urbanism.

Traveling through the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan the past 18 months, I found almost every government trying to engage in reforms to restructure their societies through income and property redistribution. Most of them had found that unprecedented increases in output—most developing countries in the first three years of the 1970s were well on the road to exceeding the second development decade target of increasing GNP by six percent a year when the oil crisis hit—had aggravated social problems of population growth, unemployment, maldistribution of income and rural stagnation. The

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attempt of the 1960s to try and repeat the Western experience of transforming societies from subsistence agriculture into the more prosperous kind that live by buying and selling had merely moved small elites into industrialization and prosperity, but frozen the vast majority of people in poverty. In the Philippines and Pakistan national leaders assumed near-dictatorial powers to enable them to redistribute property, nationalize the holdings of the richest elites and begin to carry out land reform. Indonesia, a stage behind, was just beginning to realize that its reliance on trickle-down economics was heading it toward a political explosion. Thailand, where students had toppled a 20-year military rule, was just beginning to come to grips with its major internal problem, an almost total lack of social mobility, especially for poor youths in the rural countryside. Bangladesh and the Gangetic plain of India seemed already plunged into a seeming irreversible decline into lawlessness, hunger and social breakdown.

This week I am returning to Asia for another tour of these countries. Wheat and rice crops to be harvested in the spring, for which fertilizer was obtained before the energy crisis began in October, promise to be good so that Asia should have another six months or so of relative stability. After that, if there is no international rescue operation on a scale that now seems totally improbable, and especially if the big cities like Jakarta, Dacca, Calcutta or even Bangkok run out of food or prices go so high the poor masses cannot afford to buy it, the prospect looks so bad as to defy any sort of sensible forecast. One development expert says at least a quarter of the earth's population is "slipping into a period of really incredible chaos."

My own feeling, after traveling from Washington and New York to San Francisco and Los Angeles and observing the present mood of this country and the tendency to blame *all* poor countries for the energy crisis, is that it will probably take a series of violent political eruptions in South Asia, tropical Africa and Central America to arouse enough American sympathy and support for the needed new foreign aid formulation. And even this would depend on avoiding a global recession. The wrenching changes now being experienced by Western Europe and Japan demonstrate just how much of their prosperity the past 20 years was based on cheap Arab oil. And those days are over.

Alone of the major non-Communist powers, the United States has a reasonable chance of returning to a strong economic position by the end of 1974. It is 89 percent self-sufficient in oil, has vast oil shale and coal deposits, is going to make a fortune in food exports this year in a world of scarcity, has also benefited greatly from increased demand and prices for its raw material exports and is the most attractive country for investment from the capital surplus OPEC countries. With luck, perhaps quite a lot of luck, the US will be in position to be generous and assert its leadership by the end of the year.

At least, that's the hope of it. And for the poorest countries just about the only one.

An Interview With Abba Eban

The following conversation between Israeli foreign minister Abba Eban, who was in Washington last week for conversations with Secretary of State Kissinger, and Joan Peters Kaplan—a correspondent for Chicago newspapers—took place several weeks ago, the first part of it in Tel Aviv, the rest in Jerusalem.

Kaplan: Now that the Egyptian-Israeli disengagement has gone into effect, is there reason to believe Syria will enter a meaningful agreement of any kind with Israel?

Eban: I'm informed by Secretary Kissinger—as a result of his contacts in Damascus—that they would in principle like to negotiate a disengagement agreement. The very fact that the Syrians find us within about 50 or 60 kilometers of Damascus ought to exercise pressure upon them—they must want to see us further away from their capital city. As you sit in the presidential palace—or so I'm told by somebody who has done so in Damascus—you can see the Israeli positions on Mt. Hermon. Now *no* regime, especially a regime as proud and as full of prestige complexes as

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the Syrian regime, can possibly not desire to change that situation.

Q: Would Israel remove its troops from Mt. Hermon for a prisoner exchange?

A: Well, the prisoners have their own absolute rights under the Geneva Convention—[those rights] are not dependent on anything else. But when the deputy foreign minister of Syria suggested that simultaneously with the release of the prisoners we vacate one or two positions on Mt. Hermon—not the main position that we always had, but the new positions—we did not reject that at all. From the Israeli point of view people are more important than anything else. And since these two particular positions do not affect our overall military capacity, we did not refuse to include them in the general stabilization of the cease-fire. In other words, we suggested that we allow 15,000 villagers back, that two of the garrisons near Hermon be abandoned—not to Syria, but to the United Nations (that is *not*, however, the central position which we have on Hermon), and that there would be carried out a prisoner exchange. I'm afraid that prisoner exchanges, in modern times, usually come about in a broader context than the prisoners issue itself.

Q: Many Israelis I've spoken with agree with Menahem Begin and his Likud opposition party, that no withdrawals should begin until a peace treaty or diplomatic relations have been established with the Arabs. Do you feel that the disengagement at Suez was carried out prematurely?

A: That's absurd. We accepted the agreement [with Egypt] because it creates a situation much better for us in every way than the situation without, or before, the disengagement. It's a better military situation, and we've gained a great deal by the limitation of forces on the Egyptian side. They've also made very unusual concessions. We've broken away from the era of blockade and of volcanic hostility. There is a strong possibility of creating a new civilian reality around the Suez Canal, which would be a better guarantee for peace than any amount of documents. At any rate, it is interesting that the Knesset [parliament] accepted the agreement with such a heavy majority, in spite of such a vehement and demagogic opposition. The alternative, let's be perfectly clear, would have meant new war by now, with new death and new prisoners and without any possibility of advantage.

Q: In view of continued avowals by the Arabs to destroy Israel, doesn't your position imply a naive trust in the sincerity of this sudden Arab wish for peaceful coexistence? Can you believe they will do an abrupt about-face and recognize Israel's existence?

A: All of our strategy has been to bring them to that realization. We must not be in the position where—if they *do* come to that realization—we refuse to recognize it. In general, I don't believe there's any connection between the respect for agreements and the moral purity of the signatories. The question is whether they have a greater interest in maintaining it or not maintaining it. I believe that this agreement contains built-in balances which would make the results of the violation very unpleasant for them.

Q: Aside from getting the Israeli troops off their backs—with the Egyptian Third Army surrounded and some Israeli-held positions within a few kilometers of Cairo—what do the Egyptians gain by this agreement?

A: I think they are attracted by the importance that they'll have internationally by possession and operation of an international maritime route, as distinct from waiting for the check to come from Saudi Arabia or from Kuwait to compensate them for the Suez Canal being closed. It will increase Egypt's prestige in the Arab world and in the Mediterranean world, to be the owner and the operator of the canal . . . I believe that their international importance has grown; their relations with the United States have improved; they have the possibility of a better relationship with Europe, through the canal.

Q: Is there a secret timetable for Israeli withdrawal?

A: There is a timetable for the implementation of this agreement, but no timetable beyond that and no other disengagement has been agreed to. On the contrary, there is no commitment by Egypt or Israel beyond the scope of this agreement. Some people, including your Secretary of State, believe this *does* mark a significant change in Egyptian policy—not perhaps toward final peace but certainly away from war.

Q: How certain are you that the United States will support you fully in the event of another Arab attack?

A: I think we will be supported as much as we were last time, and that is enough—with arms and with the policy of deterring Soviet intervention. We don't ask more than that.

Q: If there is another attack, don't the Israelis need the guarantee of more support than they have had in the past, for instance, anti-missile equipment to use against the Arabs' Soviet missiles? And would such a provision by the Americans create pressures upon Israel to accept other compromises?

A: There has been no pressure and we have no complaints whatever about American arms supplies. It was maximal and we just have nothing to say except ap-

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preciation. And, of course, it was effective.

Q: Will Israel be able to keep its independence in foreign policy, rather than becoming a base of American-Middle East policy interests?

A: I think the two things are the same. There is no conflict. If there is a conflict we shall protect our own survival against anybody else's judgment. I think the American people will respect that because, for America, the Middle East is not absolutely vital, whereas Israel's survival is vital for us. That's why whenever we become very obdurate we usually get respect from the United States. In other words, we have not had, and I do not envisage the kind of conflict to which you refer.

Q: If demands arose which Israel felt it couldn't accede to. . . .

A: We wouldn't accede to them, and I think the US would accept our view as a fact. It has done so in the past: they proposed the Rogers plan, we didn't like it and they didn't press it.

Q: What about six months from now? Are you confident that the United States will support Israel if the other side violates the agreement then?

A: If they want war they will have to violate the disengagement agreement—that itself is the virtue of the agreement. We don't ask for American guarantees, but I'm certain that the US will be *against* the violator and *for* the preserver of the agreement.

Q: But you are prepared for such a violation?

A: Mmm-mnnn . . . I am also prepared for the hope that they will not violate it. The indications now are that they are serious about it. Come and ask me again a few months from now.

Q: What is your assessment of the extent to which Israel's relations with Europe have deteriorated as a result of the Arab oil embargo?

A: There's no such thing as "Europe." There has been no deterioration with Germany, Holland, Luxembourg, with many countries. Some countries, however, allowed their short-term *mineral* interests to predominate against their moral interests. They've not gained anything by it. And I think we will see an improvement, because paradoxically, the countries that made these statements on behalf of the Arabs have not done better with their oil supplies than countries like Germany and Holland, which refuse to make these statements. And there is a revulsion in Europe already against excessive intimidation by oil interests.

Q: Isn't it the people rather than the governments who are revolted?

A: Eventually opinion overtakes policy—there is now a gap between policy and opinion, but I believe that opinion will have its impress on policy sooner or later.

Q: In the opinion of many Israelis, your army has become politicized to the point of handicap.

A: I don't say that the army has become politicized. One very prominent officer has allowed his restraints to be completely overcome and has developed this megalomaniac view of his mission. But I think that Mr. Sharon [Gen. Ariel "Arik" Sharon] will find that his Napoleonic fantasies will not advance him politically. I believe the public is determined to restore the army to its disconnection from party politics, and that the only general who ever mixed them up will find that his political fortunes will not be advanced.

Q: Didn't Sharon charge that even when the critical decision to cross the Suez Canal had been made, several generals bickered about which one would command the crossing, based on which political party he represented?

A: That's such a grotesque falsehood that it's cost Sharon a great deal of credulity and of support.

Q: And yet, I met dozens of soldiers who adore Sharon—one in particular, who lost a leg in the Yom Kippur war and said he'd lose the other one for Arik Sharon.

A: Well, it would be a waste of a leg. Sharon actually enunciated the idea that, on receiving an order, he is empowered to decide whether to carry it out or not. Well, there is the celebrated case of Gen. MacArthur, who found out how wrong he was. With all due respect, MacArthur was a greater soldier than Arik Sharon—at least no less great a soldier.

Q: From the first explosive interview he gave to Charles Mohr of The New York Times, *Sharon started people asking a lot of questions about the reasons for the failures at the beginning of the October war. The soldiers coming back after the disengagement have complained that the Israeli civilians are so traumatized, they have to be told that Israel won the war. You said in a speech that Israel had to rebuild its concepts, and its style. Were you referring to this trauma?*

A: I mean that before October 6, we had a vision of total superiority, of unlimited self-confidence. Sharon was even talking about our ability to conquer everything between Khartoum and Teheran, Algeria and the Persian Gulf. I said at the time that even if it were true, it would be better not to say so. This kind of arrogance seems always to invite a corresponding downfall. At any rate, we had a vision of our own omnipotence and of total Arab ineptitude that is simply not true . . . The deterrent power of our army didn't work; it didn't deter them [the Arabs], did not throw them back in two or three days across the canal—which had always

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been the military prediction. And it is very traumatic to try and build a new image when we lived for six years—and the rest of the world with us—within a certain concept of what Israel was and what the Arabs were.

Q: And the reality is different now?

A: Yes. Not substantively, I think there is still a big gap between us and our neighbors, otherwise we wouldn't have had this victorious ending of the war. But we must take a less buoyant view of our position.

Q: Doesn't it seem that the Israelis have gone to the other extreme, that they're tortured by self-doubt?

A: If we get moving, get on with economic tasks, if we can negotiate our agreements—our people will recover its self-confidence. It shouldn't have lost it, because the war was a victory. But we'd reached the stage where only 100 percent of victory was acceptable to us. Just as in our relations with the outside world we sometimes define as an enemy anybody who agrees with us only 90 percent.

Q: You wrote somewhere about windows being opened by the Israelis. What would come in the windows?

A: Less faith in uniquely military solutions, an understanding of the fact that we are not in a position to dictate our will and our interests to our neighbors, nor are they in a position to dictate their will and their interests to us. Negotiation is a process out of which nobody emerges with 100 percent of what he wanted. We must be prepared for the kind of empirical, pragmatic, perhaps untidy, slightly indeterminate agreement such as that which we achieved with the Egyptians. I'm afraid it's going to be typical of the sort of empirical resourcefulness required of us in the next few years.

Q: Will your government eventually have to make serious compromises with the National Religious Party (Mavdal) to effect a stronger government?

A: What we will not do is to change our legislation in such a way as to discriminate against Conservative and Reform Jews. I think Israel must accept the inherent pluralism of Jewish religious development.

Q: The "who's a Jew" controversy revolves mainly around the form of conversion—Orthodox, Conservative or Reform Judaism—that is acceptable in order for Israel's law of return—instant citizenship—to apply. Those whose mothers are Jewish are automatically accepted, as are converted Jews. The Religious Party claims only those who have been converted by Orthodox tradition shall be accepted as instant Israelis—that other Jewish converts should go through regular immigration procedures as they would in the US. Why does the government find that so unreasonable?

A: What gives the Orthodox Jews . . . a monopoly on the interpretation of religious conversion? At any rate, it's too late, because American Jewry, for example, has gone in for this pluralism of its religious development, and the question is whether we recognize it or not. If we don't, then we cut ourselves off from a great part of Jewry.

Q: The world has been watching the "who's a Jew" debate, thinking it's terribly important, and speculating it could pull the government apart.

A: It's important for that reason—that it could pull the government apart—but it's inherently not important.

Q: Many Israelis believe that if your government had accepted opposition leader Menahem Begin's offer to join the government last October 9—three days after the Yom Kippur attack—Israel would not have been as torn as it was by divisiveness.

A: It would have had a very bad effect, because we'd have ended up at the end of October without a cease-fire—and we would not have been able to sign a disengagement agreement. It would only have made possible a government of continual war. As soon as you try to get a cease-fire he [Begin] leaves the government. He opposed the cease-fire in 1948, he opposed the cease-fire in August 1970, he opposed the cease-fire in October 1973, he opposed the six-point agreement which led to the release of prisoners, he opposed the disengagment agreement.

Q: If Israel holds new elections, could Begin win, do you think?

A: The people of Israel will never elect a government of that kind, never, because basically the people do not want a policy of endless bloodshed. They understand that you cannot reconcile a philosophy like his with even hope of—not even peace, but—some kind of tranquility. The concept of a Jewish state that does not put peace in the center of its philosophy would be a terrible travesty of history. One of Begin's problems is his sincerity—he *believes* in this policy of unconditional intransigence.

Q: I've spoken to many Israelis who're frustrated because the government hasn't changed. Where are the young political leaders? Are there any, or is a weary, 76-year-old lady really "the strongest of the weak"?

A: Israel has a very patriarchal—or matriarchal—tradition. Our leaders have always been septuagenarians. And grumbling is one of the few untaxed luxuries that we have. I think that when Pericles spoke of Athens, he must have had Israel in mind: "This people was born to have no rest itself and to give none to others."

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No Recession in the Arms Business

Weapons for Sale

by Stanley Karnow

Nobel, Krupp, Zaharoff and the other giant munitions-makers of the past were small-fry compared to present-day arms entrepreneurs. The global weapons business is currently breaking all records, and there is little prospect of its slowing down. Total international sales in 1973 ran close to $15 billion, more than twice what they were just three years ago. The US, which leads the world trade, sealed orders last year for over five billion dollars worth of military hardware—a threefold increase from 1970, when the Nixon administration began encouraging American defense industries to seek overseas markets. Some 50 other industrial nations ranging from the Soviet Union, France and Great Britain to Belgium, Sweden and Switzerland are actively peddling everything from supersonic jet fighters to hand grenades to one another and to countries that have yet to discover indoor plumbing. The Persian Gulf states, fat with petroleum profits, are outfitting themselves with the most sophisticated aircraft, missiles, ships and tanks, partly to brandish against their neighbors and largely to enhance their sense of self-importance. Latin Americans are escalating their purchases of modern equipment, African governments are starting to strengthen their firepower, and Asian regimes like those of South Vietnam and South Korea are only deterred from joining the buying spree by the fact that, under the US Military Assistance Program, they get more weapons free than they can use.

The insanity in it all is that the meager reserves of many Asian, African and Latin American countries are being drained from more important tasks. President Johnson pointed to this when he calculated in January 1969 that "the cost of acquiring and maintaining one squadron of supersonic aircraft diverts resources that would build and maintain a university." His admonition convinced nobody, since, as the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency recently estimated, military expenditures by underdeveloped nations as a whole are rising at double the rate of their economic growth. The high price of armament is apparent throughout the so-called Third World. Egypt has reportedly mortgaged its cotton crop for years in order to pay for Soviet materiel it bought as far back as the 1967 war against Israel. Weapons purchases by President Sukarno contributed to the collapse of the Indonesian economy, and countries like Uganda and Afghanistan can barely afford to own and operate advanced equipment. Although Chile was hovering on the brink of economic disaster before its coup d'état last fall, it nevertheless contracted to buy F-5E Tigers and A-4 Skyhawks from the US on credit. The Nixon administration, which refused at the time to extend development loans to Chile, evidently agreed to the aircraft deal as a way of reinforcing its links with the Chilean military establishment that ousted Marxist President Salvador Allende Gossens.

While importing weapons does not necessarily trigger wars, it tends to provoke regional arms races that can upset local power balances. Between 1958 and 1968, for example, Argentina, Brazil and Chile imitated each other by purchasing aircraft carriers, submarines and ship-to-air missiles from Britain and West Germany, and that process of emulation has recurred time and again in Latin America. When Peru ordered Mirage V supersonic fighters from France in 1967, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela immediately signed up for similar airplanes, and last year when President Nixon altered a previous US ban on the sale of sophisticated jets to Latin America, the same group of countries rushed in to buy the equipment on favorable credit terms. This arms parity is innocuous as long as the Latin Americans avoid disputes, but the possession of fancy weapons by rival states can aggravate tensions if, as is often the case, they misperceive each other's intentions. Such has been the pattern in the Middle East. Competitive arms build-ups did not cause the war between Israel and the Arabs, but they served to exacerbate mutual distrust in the area and they made the conflict bloodier when it finally erupted. In the Persian Gulf region, meanwhile, vast purchases by Iran of American aircraft and other military merchandise have stimulated Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to bid for US, French and British equipment. Not to be outpaced, the tiny emirate of Abu Dhabi, with a population of 80,000, has bought a fleet of Mirages from France, and, since it has no pilots, plans to hire Pakistanis to fly them.

The extreme secrecy of the weapons business conveniently permits suppliers to violate arms embargoes and other sanctions. Although President Charles de Gaulle outlawed the export of equipment to "front line" belligerents in the 1967 Middle East war, the French undoubtedly knew that some of the 110 Mirages they sold to Libya would eventually be transferred to Egypt for use against Israel. The French, who never signed the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, are

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said to be touting low-yield tactical nuclear weapons to prospective customers. The South Africans managed to circumvent Britain's arms ban against them by buying British aircraft manufactured under license in Italy. Despite a United Nations injunction against providing weapons to the Portuguese for use against insurgents in their African territories, Portugal has been receiving surplus US materiel from European members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Last year, testifying before the House subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense James H. Noyes denied allegations that arms sold to Iran had in 1965 been covertly passed on to Pakistan in violation of a US embargo on any weapons shipments to the Indian subcontinent then at war. But as John Stanley and Maurice Pearton showed in their book on the international arms traffic, Iran bought 90 American-made F-86 Sabres from Germany, and, while pledging to observe the US prohibition against unauthorized weapons transfers, promptly delivered them to Pakistan. The Germans then turned around and sold a batch of British-made Sea Hawk aircraft to India, skirting a UN embargo by consigning them to Italy. The Pentagon, which was supposed to be monitoring the American ban at the time, lamely explained that it lacked "precise information" on the Pakistan deal. Pentagon spokesmen are equally vague these days when asked whether the Persian Gulf recipients of US arms may be illegally transferring them elsewhere. "We consider it unlikely but we can offer no guarantee," is their routine reply.

The Pentagon's reliability in the realm of arms sales is dubious, since it has gone to extraordinary lengths to promote US weapons abroad. Back in the 1960s, in an effort to bypass credit curbs, Pentagon officials invented an ingenious concealment device under which they drew funds at their own discretion from the Export-Import Bank and floated clandestine loans to prospective arms clients. Nearly $700 million was extended to buyers in Latin America, the Middle East and Asia before the complex dodge, known as the "Country-X" Account, was uncovered by William Bader, then a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff. Since then, despite persistent administration lobbying, Congress has refused to ease credit limitations in the weapons business. But secret subsidies still somehow creep into the traffic as the Pentagon energetically strives to market US arms overseas, and its involvement in the trade dramatizes the workings of what President Eisenhower called the "military-industrial complex."

To understand how all this functions, imagine a mythical Sheik Ahmed of mythical Abu Fawzi, who learns that his neighbors are acquiring foreign aircraft and decides to match them. He signals the nearest US embassy, which sends over a defense attaché bearing the latest Northrop, Grumman, Lockheed and McDonnell Douglas catalogues. The sheik scans the brochures, and without commiting himself, expresses interest. The attaché thereupon cables the Pentagon and an International Security Affairs team arrives to study the situation. The sheik may only need another camel, but the team, whose dozen members operate as salesmen, urge him to buy airplanes. By now Abu Fawzi's prime topic of conversation is aircraft. The US ambassador is too busy with other matters and the Pentagon team, which must return home, recommends the installation of a US military assistance advisory group, at least on temporary duty. The MAAG—30 men headed by a major general—is soon joined by aircraft company representatives, most of them retired air force officers, and together they examine the situation further, while back in Washington lobbyists for the competing firms try to influence the decision. Since the sheik exports oil, money is no object. But he lacks pilots, mechanics, control tower operators, radio experts and every other conceivable skill, and a program must be tailored to his requirements. Finally a complicated proposal is reached to sell him, say, a half-dozen F-9 Ravens, the $20 million price tag to include the education of pilots in the US and the creation of a maintenance school in Abu Fawzi. The sheik accepts the deal "in principle," and, after its approval in Washington at the State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, he signs the contract. Delivery schedules are negotiated, and a new phase opens.

The Pentagon determines that the MAAG must remain permanently, and not long afterward families of its staff arrive, followed by specialists to direct construction of a PX, commissary, school, clinic, swimming pool, bowling alley and air-conditioned bungalows. The Pentagon also sends out a technical assistance field team, accompanied by wives and children, and the aircraft company sets up its representatives and their families, and facilities are built for them as well at the sheik's expense. Meanwhile the enlarged mission has been advising the sheik that aircraft alone are insufficient, and he nods agreement. Thus after winning the bid, the Dillingham Company comes in to construct a jet airstrip and ancillary road network. But airplanes and a strip are not enough, so Hughes Aircraft arrives to build an "air defense ground environment," and since a warning system by itself is inadequate, the sheik must have Hawk surface-to-air missiles from Raytheon. With his investment escalating, the sheik also needs computers and radio communications, and IBM and Motorola representatives appear. His unproductive expenditures spiral into the hundreds of millions. To recoup he raises the price of his oil by a dollar a barrel.

The US campaign to merchandise rather than give away arms originated during the Kennedy administration for two intertwined purposes—to correct a balance of payments deficit that in 1961 totaled more than three billion dollars, and simultaneously to improve the

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effectiveness of the NATO forces by selling them standardized American hardware. The drive was managed by Henry Kuss, a Pentagon supersalesman. Within four years he succeeded in more than doubling US sales while cutting American military grants sharply. The change was so radical that US aerospace firms came to rely on overseas markets for three-quarters of their business. But in the late 1960s another change overtook the worldwide arms trade. West European countries, now booming industrial nations, broke the US weapons monopoly and began to compete in the international arms trade, and their rise was paralleled by the Soviet Union's dynamic entry into the business. The focus of sales shifted to the underdeveloped lands, and this coincided with and perhaps bulwarked a fresh strategic concept taking shape as President Nixon entered office in 1969.

Administration officials currently contend that the arms trade is indispensable to the US balance of payments and jobs. Pointing to Grumman's troubles before Iran placed a $900 million order for 30 F-14A Tomcat fighters, they assert that the trade helps to underwrite the cost of weapons research and development. Claiming that weapons sales serve to strengthen US influence overseas, Adm. Thomas Moorer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said last year that "if we provide the material, our power to persuade is enhanced." Former Secretary of State William Rogers argued that if military customers "don't get the planes from us they will get them someplace else." Some administration spokesmen even estimate that, by selling billions of dollars worth of arms to Middle East oil producers, the US is siphoning off huge sums that might otherwise disrupt the international monetary system. But these rationales are less significant than the fact that the arms business is part and parcel of the Nixon doctrine, under which foreign surrogates equipped with American weapons are expected to protect US interests abroad, and at a saving. As Deputy Secretary of Defense David Packard said in 1970, increased arms sales were necessary for "maintaining an adequate defense posture at a minimum cost."

This grand design fits Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlevi's ambition to have Iran recognized as "one of the keys of the world," as Oriana Fallaci reported in these pages in December. To fulfill that ambition he has been boosting the price of his oil so that his petroleum revenues now are $16 billion per year and are likely to rise. He has used his revenues to become the largest collector of weapons on earth, having purchased $3.7 billion worth of US arms during the past 18 months. And he plans to spend as much as nine billion dollars more during the next two years. The way his dreams of glory have ballooned is reflected in his accumulation of aircraft. In the early 1960s, preoccupied primarily by regional disputes with adjacent Iraq, he bought F-5A Freedom Fighters to support ground troops. By the end of the decade, seeking air superiority in the area, he began to acquire F-4 Phantoms, one of the most maneuverable fighters available. Early this year, his horizons now broadened to include the entire Persian Gulf arena as well as the Indian Ocean, he signed a contract to buy F-14As, aircraft that are basically manned launchers for Phoenix missiles capable of traveling to altitudes of 120 miles. He is also said to be contemplating the purchase of 30 F-15s, produced by McDonnell Douglas, as a supplement to his F-4s and his expansive strategic notions are mirrored as well in his acquisition of helicopters, transport aircraft, ocean patrol airplanes and hovercraft. He is negotiating to buy submarines, which are useless in the shallow Persian Gulf, and he has confirmed his claim to a defense perimeter in the Indian Ocean by persuading the ruler of Mauritius to grant him naval facilities.

Some congressmen, noting the shah's involvement in supporting the sultan of Oman against the Dhofar rebels, are worried that he may be employing US weapons in adventurous pursuits beyond his borders. But there appears to be more cause for concern in his conviction, as he put it to Miss Fallaci, that Iran is the "last bastion defending our civilization" against a Soviet project to push through the Persian Gulf to the Indian Ocean. If that threat exists it is hardly visible. The Kremlin has sold about one billion dollars worth of arms to Iraq and is aiding the radical Marxist regime in South Yemen. But, as Rep. Lee Hamilton of Indiana has pointed out, US weapons sales to the region are six times greater. Administration officials seem to regard the shah's warning as credible, however. Last year, testifying before Hamilton's subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia, then Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco repeated the shah's alarmist views as justification for providing him with unlimited quantities of military equipment. One State Department expert familiar with the area privately suggests that the US, anxious to keep Iranian oil flowing, is indulging the shah's fancies to resurrect the Persian Empire. In any case he is being blown up to ludicrous dimensions.

Efforts dating back to the days of the League of Nations to abolish the international arms trade have failed. But weapons suppliers have demonstrated that, at critical moments, they can limit conflicts. The US and the Soviet Union used their control over Israeli and Arab arms shipments as leverage to get the belligerents to negotiate a settlement of the Yom Kippur war, and the same tactic has been employed to restrain the Indians and Pakistanis. In 1968 President Johnson recommended that weapons shipments be open to public scrutiny. It is still a good idea. Another is to negotiate the limitation of conventional as well as nuclear arms. The alternative is a continuing race that could gradually accelerate to include atomic arms, which, when exploded, will certainly make the balance of payments deficit and similar problems seem trivial.

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

In the Name of the Father
(New Yorker)

Mame
(Warner Bros.)

A man and a youth come toward us through the arcades of an Italian city. Suddenly the man strikes the youth, forbidding him—his son, as we hear—to strike back. But the son does hit back. More silent walking. Another sudden assault by the father, another response by the son. End of sequence, which is never explained. We never even see the father again. We cut immediately to the boy's school.

This is the opening of Marco Bellocchio's *In the Name of the Father*, made 1971, just released here. Like many other openings, it tells a good deal about the picture that follows and about the maker's methods. The film begins as if it had already been going on for some time. True, under the credits we have previously seen some empty corridors of a school, so we can make inferences. Still, backed by Nicola Piovani's slashing music, Bellocchio plunges us in precipitously, warning us at once that we are only going to be presented with data from a continuum and will have to make our own narrative connections. His opening is a small, hard, almost tangible phenomenological sample. This method, to drive separate slivers of experience into us and let us make the inferences, is just right for Bellocchio's purpose: to contrast what seems to be with what is. It's only when he tries to do the inferential work for us that the film wobbles.

Almost all of it takes place in the boy's school, a Jesuit institution for the sons of wealthy fathers. Angelo is about 16 (played by Yves Beneyton) so that's the group we stay with, though there are also younger boys. I shan't detail the events (script by Bellocchio) except to say that they deal with and juxtapose three groups: the (largely) clerical faculty; the waiters and servants, who are misfits, morons and ex-convicts, underpaid; and the students, who are all extreme examples of adolescent impulse and frustration under more than the usual stress that our society imposes on them. The high point is a school play prepared by and starring the handsome, bright, youthfully perverse Angelo, a play that is a subtly obscene and heretical horror comedy.

The themes are, inevitably, anti-clericalism, anti-traditionalism, anti-pedantry. The obvious reference point is Vigo's *Zero de conduite*, along with its derivative, Anderson's *If . . . .* There are even some reminders of the school sequences in Fellini's *8 1/2* and, particularly because of the harassment of a nun and some insistence on ugly faces, some overtones of Buñuel. But all this is merely to say that Bellocchio, like most good artists, comes from previous good artists as well as from himself. His film is original because it is his: his experiences of life and of art have fused through his talent into a unique temperament.

A school is always an apt setting for a drama of change, or of change defeated, because it's the most obvious place where the past/present tries to affect the future. Vigo's glorious 45-minute film is still the best work on the subject because it's the one in which fact and metaphor most confidently support one another, but it has one grievous, much-noted fault. All the boys are appealing, all the teachers are creepy or villainous except the young teacher who is on the boys' side. In Bellocchio's script the boys are a very mixed lot; many of *them* are creepy. And the vice rector (Renato Scarpa), who is certainly not on their side, is a well meaning, patient, abused man who sees matters differently from and, he believes, more clearly than even the brightest young Turk like Angelo. So it's not just because of fairness but also on the more important point of the reality of generational schism that Bellocchio's script is, in this one particular, better than Vigo's. (Not to mention the ludicrously lopsided *If . . . .*)

But the best strengths of the picture are in its being as a picture. Like Piovani's music, the color photography by Franco di Giacomo cuts at us from the first shots of the empty rooms. "Cut" and "slash" are the dominant figurative words for the film. Bellocchio moves his pictures across the screen vigorously, even harshly, striking at us with images, rhythmically controlled yet often disconcerting.

As was plain from his first two features, *Fist in the Pocket* and *China Is Near*, the mind behind it all is Marxist, but complexly so, not dogmatically blatant. The anti-clericalism is not presented as the unchallengeable Truth, only as the brightest boys' sole possible response; but Bellocchio also wants us to understand the works and intent of the Church, which in Italy means much more than religion. The vice rector is a sincere man as much victimized by the system as are the boys. Angelo's last remarks about a society based on reason and science are surely enclosed in Bellocchio's irony. The perfect faith of the adolescent in perfectibility at the close, is to be seen as part of historical process, not a conclusion.

This director's sensibility is surgical, prying, sharp. Often the camera moves down the hall past the boys' rooms, peering through the engraved-glass portholes in their doors, revealing them as isolated near-maniacs, as might be the case in a prison (as was the case in Genet's film *Chant d'amour*). Some of the film is brilliant, like the school-play sequence, or a sequence in which the Madonna comes to life and approaches a boy who is masturbating during mass. Some of it is lurid and grotesque, like the sequence in which Angelo, wearing a dog costume from the play, drags the body of a dead priest upstairs and down, or one involving the neurotic mother of one of the boys. Some of it, after two viewings, I still don't understand, like the scenes of demolition of part of the building. Over it all the title with a double meaning, God and dad, arches like a threat.

The picture is uneven, exaggerated, unsatisfactory, and for all the emotion in it, cold. It is also the work of a

(continued on page 33)

Films Worth Seeing

American Graffiti. California adolescents, early 1960s. Insight transforms trivia.

The Exorcist. Just as ugly as you've heard, and (but?) probably even scarier.

The Last Detail. Jack Nicholson electrifies this story of the peacetime navy's routine harshness.

The Mother and the Whore. Young Paris today. Three characters formed largely by the French films they and we know.

SK

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How Not to Write a Biography

Faulkner
by Joseph Blotner

(Random House; two volumes, $25)

Although he may not have been as explicit in his objections as certain other writers, William Faulkner insisted more than once that he did *not* want his life story told. "About the biography," he wrote an editor in 1930, "Don't tell the bastards anything. It can't matter to them. Tell them I was born of an alligator and a nigger slave at the Geneva Conference two years ago." In 1953 *Life* magazine printed a two-part exposé of "The Man behind the Faulkner Myth." The man was incensed. "My private life is my private life—my books are in the public domain—and there's no connection." He said once, "I'm old fashioned and probably a little mad too; I don't like having my private life and affairs available to just any and every one who has the price of the vehicle it's printed in."

Nevertheless, I had wanted a biography of Faulkner almost from the time I first read him. To me he seemed an author who had virtually free access to unconscious materials of an unparalleled richness and intensity—unparalleled since Dostoevsky—materials he was sometimes able to convert to supreme artistic use. His style and narrative method betrayed their origin in private necessity, declared their function as self-exploration, perhaps as self-therapy. A good biography, I believed, would refine our understanding of his works by helping us to discover what the experiences were, the internal and external pressures that demanded release in this unique, sustained and passionate vision.

There were other serious questions that a biographer might answer. What was the true nature of Faulkner's Southernness, his small-townness, his conservatism? How close were his fictional creations to their real-life sources? Faulkner's peculiar public acts and lying legends demanded explanation.

Joseph L. Blotner was a 36-year-old assistant professor of English at the University of Virginia when Faulkner began a part-time affiliation with that school in 1957. He helped to organize Faulkner's appearances there, tape-recorded his classroom comments, met William and Estelle Faulkner on various social occasions, and in 1962 served as a pallbearer at the novelist's funeral. He was assigned by Faulkner's publisher the job of discovering and writing the events of his life.

So that now, despite Faulkner's pleas, his "private life and affairs" are "available to just any and every one who has the price," which is $25. But Faulkner's biography is still to be written. What Professor Blotner has put together, and what Random House is selling, are 1846 pages of ill-edited life records, accompanied by 200 pages of notes identifying their sources.

We can now know when Billy Faulkner (then spelled Falkner) made the honor roll, when he had his teeth fixed, when he had his tires recapped; exactly which days he went flying or hunting or sailing, and how far, and on what plane or horse or boat. We can read details of his daughter's roommate's stomach troubles in the spring of 1952, the components of his pipe mixture, and exact records of various things eaten, drunk and said at English department socials in Charlottesville.

We learn useful things too. Blotner provides detailed accounts of Faulkner's work habits, critical reception, sales and earnings. (*The Sound and the Fury* sold 1789 copies in its first 18 months.) He pays close attention to his periods of dutiful drudgery in Hollywood, where with the help of booze Faulkner could earn enough money from unimportant hackwork to pay his bills in Mississippi to go on writing unprofitable novels. He was plagued by financial worries, in fact, right up to March of 1948 when (at the age of 50) he made his first big sale to the movies, *Intruder in the Dust*, for $50,000.

We are given clinical analyses of Faulkner's alcoholism and other illnesses. We are provided with sensible explications of his relations with Sherwood Anderson and Ernest Hemingway, his supposed creative dependence on Phil Stone. We learn almost more than we want to know about Oxford, Mississippi. Blotner is a very good local historian; he loves to write about Memphis crime and Jackson politicians.

We are reminded how sophisticated a student of literature this "rustic visionary" really was, and provided with historical as well as literary sources for many of Faulkner's works. Key characters, images and ideas often occurred to him years before their definitive appearance in print. Blotner is able to tell us of these, offer at least superficial accounts of his textual revisions, and describe some of the more conscious elements of Faulkner's creative strategy, like the willful incorporation of Christian symbolism into *A Fable* and other works.

The lies to reporters are corrected, the life-legends dispelled, the public acts precisely chronicled. But after the 1846 pages and 200 pages of notes, I felt very little closer to the mind of the man who wrote the books: to Faulkner the artist, as distinct from Faulkner the countryman, pilot, raconteur, alcoholic, Hollywood hack, lecturer, foxhunter or celebrity. Because in this book Blotner is far less interested in "Faulkner the artist" than in "Faulkner the man," because he is simply too timid (or too humble or too polite) to pry into privacies or speculate about really serious affairs.

For the first 1200 or 1300 pages I found his book readable, at least: pedestrian but not pushy. This is not one of those tendentious, thesis-ridden biographies that twists its subject about like putty and orders us what to think.

And I cannot entirely blame the biographer for the special tedium of the last 600 pages. The last years of many writers' lives, when they are often least creative, most comfortable and most lionized, are rarely as attractive or exemplary as the years of suffering and struggle. In Faulkner's case the post-Nobel decade is rendered especially depressing by his complacent willingness to come out and play the Man of Letters role, mouthing over and over his platitudes about doom and the human heart, crafting Dixiecrat defenses of the Southern way of life. At the same time Faulkner's private life—which no longer bears much relation to his writing—has become either so trivial or so pathetic (fox hunting with Virginia millionaires, drying out from binges, fretting after young girls) that one understands his reluctance to see it published.

But these, Faulkner's least productive, least valuable, least interesting years, are the most copiously documented. Considerably more pages are devoted to the last 12 years of Faulkner's life

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(Knight's Gambit, Requiem for a Nun, A Fable, The Town, The Mansion, The Reivers) than to the incredible 12 years between 1928 and 1940, when he wrote *The Sound and the Fury, Sanctuary, As I Lay Dying, Light in August, Pylon, Absalom, Absalom!, The Unvanquished, Wild Palms, The Hamlet* and most of his stories. The last *five* years are those when Professor Blotner knew Faulkner more or less personally, and so for much of 200 pages biography gives way to sentimental memoir of Me and The Chief. "As we drove home that night I reflected that Mr. Faulkner and I had spent a total of fifteen hours in each other's company that day. . . ."

This personalizing is forgivable, perhaps even endearing. What I object to is the failure it typifies throughout the book to discriminate between what matters and what doesn't; and further, to make use of the materials that count.

For all his 12 years' work and 800,000 words, there are important sources of evidence Blotner ignores. In particular he fails to consider Faulkner's works as events in his emotional life, and possible sources of autobiographical information. But even considering only the materials he presents, I find astonishing his consistent refusal to speculate or interpret, to search for pattern or shape, to make connections, to add two and two.

His log is filled with clues to Faulkner's needs and obsessions, the origins of his creative drive, materials that a sensitive and responsible biographer would have seized on and held up against the works. Faulkner *refers* to a sexually tormented adolescence, writes obsessively of frustrated, abnormal childhood couplings riven between erotic heat and a mania for purity, man and boy, boy and girl, brother and sister. Unpublished early stories are filled with scarcely transformed psychological material. "Do you really know what the trouble is with me? I'm a puritan." "I am Quentin in *The Sound and the Fury*." "I did not realize that I was trying to manufacture the sister which I did not have and the daughter I was to lose."

None of these assertions needs to be taken at face value, but all of them beg one to stop and consider: is there something here to be learned? There are psychiatrist's and doctor's reports to be assessed, an unhappy marriage and three affairs to examine, the whole pattern of a career to be traced and understood. Were his deep depression of the '40s, his coming up for air of the '50s entirely dependent on physical health, money and recognition? Or have they something to do with the resolution of personal problems so radical they had tormented him since adolescence, and a concomitant relaxation of the obsessional impulse to write?

I am not asking for Freudian biography, simply that one ask questions and suggest answers. *The Sound and the Fury*, Faulkner told his French translator, was written at a time of "severe personal strain and intimate pressures." What strain? What pressures? Blotner never asks. Faulkner wrote *Wild Palms* "to stave off what I thought was heartbreak." Over *whom?* In 1938 Faulkner suddenly made a totally out-of-character political gesture: a statement of support and a donation for the cause of Republican Spain. No explanation.

Malcolm Cowley (why didn't somebody ask *him* to write this book?) wanted to include a biographical preface in his Viking *Portable Faulkner* of 1946. But Faulkner said no. "I think that if what one has thought and hoped and endeavored and failed at is not enough, if it must be explained and excused by what he has experienced, done or suffered, while he was not being an artist, then he and the one making the evaluation have both failed."

Explained. Excused: No, that's not the point. Nor are we all just salacious gossip-mongers, trying to rip away the veils of precious privacy. His best books—more first-rate literature than *cny* American author except Henry James has ever managed to produce—they'll "endure," to use his abused word, without any biographical props. But now that intimate questionings and psychological speculation can't upset him any longer ("I can't keep tourists out of my front yard"), they may, if conducted with enough tact and intelligence, help the rest of us to understand something of the human miracle that leads to great art.

. . . and now I realize for the first time what an amazing gift I had: uneducated in every formal sense, without even very literate, let alone literary companions, yet to have made the things I made. I don't know

"Genuinely qualifies for that overused superlative, 'a major literary event.'"
—Publishers Weekly

Staying on Alone: Letters of Alice B. Toklas

Edited by **Edward Burns**, Introduction by **Gilbert A. Harrison**

A marvelous miscellany of letters—to and about the famous in the worlds of art, literature, music, and ideas. With recipes, travel notes, and reflections on Parisian life with Gertrude Stein and in the years alone. *Publishers Weekly* also writes: "This is a woman of unique strength, taste, humor and will. She writes well, too."

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where it came from. I don't know why God or gods or whoever it was, selected me to be the vessel. Believe me, this is not humility, false modesty: it is simply amazement. I wonder if you have ever had that thought about the work and the country man whom you know as Bill Faulkner—what little connection there seems to be between them.

Yes, I have. And it *does* strike me as uncanny. But it's worth thinking over, surely, *trying* to puzzle out. In fact, damn it, it's a biographer's job. I hope a decent one comes along soon.

David Littlejohn

The Private Life of a Dead Poet

Great Tom
by T. S. Matthews

(Harper & Row; $8.95)

How much of himself did T. S. Eliot put into his poetry? "Not less than everything," according to T. S. Matthews. "But he hid behind paraphernalia more elaborate than the contrivances of the Wizard of Oz." A dour yet dryly witty wizard with words, Eliot remains secreted within the 4000 lines of verse which were not all he wrote but all he permitted to be published; nevertheless Matthews has pried usefully at Eliot's shade. If he has not been able to discover answers, he has at least described the overwhelming questions—and some lesser ones as well. Informal count identifies 278 questions posed in the 194 pages of text in this unauthorized biography.

Unwilling to be fixed in a formulated phrase or to be pinned and wriggling on the wall, Eliot forbade a biography. And the second Mrs. Eliot, who married him when she was 29 and he was 68, reminded Matthews of the injunction and kept the archives, as well as the lips of many among Eliot's family and friends, sealed. Wondering how he should presume and then how he should begin, Matthews began writing anyway. Then Valerie Eliot announced that she would after all seek an authorized (and sympathetic) biographer, to scotch scandalous rumors and gossip and correct the record. But that official life— deferential, glad to be of use, polite, cautious and meticulous—is years away. Meanwhile Matthews, once editor of *Time* and longtime London resident and Eliot acquaintance, has bitten off the matter with a smile and produced his book, which he subtitles *Notes Towards the Definition of T. S. Eliot.*

Seven years before his death in 1965 Eliot felt otherwise about biography. "I do not suggest," he wrote, "that the personality and private life of a dead poet constitute sacred ground on which the psychologist must not tread. The scientist must be at liberty to study such material as his curiosity leads him to investigate, as long as the victim is dead and the laws of libel cannot be invoked to stop him. Nor is there any reason why biographies of poets should not be written. They are very useful. Any critic seriously concerned with a man's work should be expected to know something about the man's life." Then he attached a memorandum to his will to prevent such knowledge in his own case.

Facts will out. Leaping ahead of them are scandal and rumor. Was Eliot a phony scholar? A plagiarist? A fraudulent saint? A willing exile? A closet homosexual? A poet courtesy of Ezra Pound? Did he desert Vivienne, his first wife? Was she mad? Was Eliot? Was he trapped into marriage when an old man? Was he ever really poor? Or rich? Was he a fascist? An anti-Semite? A prig? A false friend? Some answers are supplied by Matthews and others proposed; and when he is short on bricks he provides an excess of mortar in the form of background color or other asides. Yet he wrings the autobiography out of Eliot's poetry and applies it to the poet's inner life. Did Eliot masturbate? Did he have a deep horror of women? Why was his precipitate marriage with Vivienne so guilt-ridden? Why did he produce so little poetry? Matthews finds appropriate verses and matches them to the known facts. The poetry will never seem the same.

Great Tom is illuminating on Eliot's college days, producing a "Copey" comment on a Harvard essay cautioning the writer to "be on guard against becoming pompous, orotund, and voluminous." Eliot remembered at least a third of the warning. He studied literature and philosophy, but found the possibility of expressing the inexpressible through two years' study of Sanskrit, where "in the sutras of Patajali he discovered that only essential words are necessary, and that a complete sentence structure is not always needed." And he wrote poetry furtively, between 1910 and 1912, creating the four poems that were later in London to make his reputation, in particular "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock."

A study leave in England and Germany became permanent expatriation when war erupted in 1914. Less than a year later he married. From the beginning the marriage did not work, yet Eliot and Vivienne tortured each other for years. Her ill health was chronic. Both husband and wife eventually required psychiatric care. To Ezra Pound, Eliot wrote, "I have *lived* through material for a score of long poems in the last six months." And Matthews notes, "They were the first six months of his married life."

A long poem did emerge from the strain and despair, while Eliot eked out a living as a bank clerk, having abandoned his graduate study inches short of the doctorate. *The Waste Land,* variously considered on publication as a hoax and a masterpiece, ended his anonymity. Thanks to Pound's pruning the jumble of rubble, the jagged bits of real glass in the kaleidoscope could form dazzling patterns, with or without the "solemn mockery" of Eliot's appended notes. He was "made." He joined a publishing firm. He founded a subsidized journal, *Criterion,* in which—despite its meager maximum of 900 subscribers—he constructed a critical edifice in which he could be arrogantly and brilliantly reactionary. His domestic life deteriorated further, but having underlined his sense of tradition by becoming an Anglican, he denied himself the solace of divorce in favor of the exquisite pain of the suppression of outward feeling. "Poetry," he wrote, "is not a turning loose of emotion, but an

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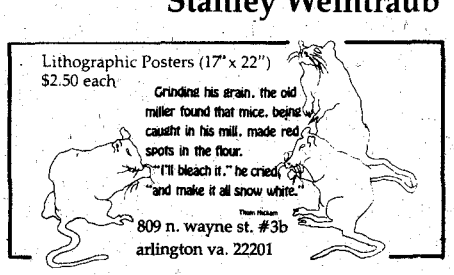
escape from emotion: it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality."

In 1932 Eliot left for a lecturing trip to America, and left a letter for his wife announcing that although he would be back and would continue to support her, he would see to it that they never met. He almost succeeded. Almost until her death in 1947 Vivienne campaigned without let-up (and without success) for a reconciliation. Finally, carrying his three newest books, she encountered him after a London lecture. He signed her books and turned away. She never saw him again. Later he removed the "To My Wife" dedication of *Ash Wednesday* from further editions. By then he had made other domestic arrangements, the last of them as unofficial bachelor with invalid bibliophile John Hayward, their nine years together ending abruptly when Eliot broke the news that he had married his young secretary. Hayward did not campaign for his return. Even more disappointed may have been a prim and once-pretty spinster in America, whom Eliot must have known better after he left Boston than before, and for whom each brief renewal of friendship was an event. (Had he never had the strength to force the moment to its crisis?) Emily Hale left more than 1000 letters from Eliot under seal at Princeton until January 1, 2020.

Eliot's last significant poetry appeared in 1942—"Little Gidding," the last of the *Four Quartets*. Thereafter he dabbled in dramas in which verse was so inobtrusive as to be nearly nonexistent. But as Matthews puts it, Eliot "had insured himself against this occupational hazard [of the drying up of poetic inspiration] by eschewing the *profession* of poetry." Yet small as is his oeuvre, it remains as elusive and tantalizing as Eliot's personality. Literary scholars, Matthews observes pungently, "continue to peck away at Eliot's poems like sparrows picking at horse shit that still smokes with life and still gives off its fresh ammoniac fumes." So will biographers peck away at the shroud of Great Tom, now that Matthews has lifted the first corner.

Stanley Weintraub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Call of the Wild

Watership Down by Richard Adams

(Macmillan; $6.95)

When it was published in England about a year ago, *Watership Down* earned two top prizes for children's literature, a "trembling" conferral of greatness by the *TLS* and widespread recognition as a classic of its genre. Classic or not, the book is an engrossing adventure with a twist: almost all of its characters are rabbits.

Borrowing details from a recognized authority on lapine behavior, Richard Adams believably creates an animal's world. Although he humanizes the rabbits enough to make individual characters of them they aren't, as is often the case in kids' stories, little people in furry costumes. Nor are their adventures exotically conceived for entertainment value. That the book requires over 400 pages to describe the move from one warren to another suggests its emphasis on an arduous form of life in which the constancy of danger measures the heroism even of simple actions.

Imminent destruction of the Sandleford warren is sniffed out by one of its more visionary members, thereby persuading some others to search for a new home. On the way various adventures temper the group into comrades who learn that all are dependent on the unique talents of each. Because of this hard-won fellowship, the rabbits are able to wrest advantage from accidents that would formerly have seemed terrifying. For example when they come upon a wounded gull, they conquer an instinctive aversion to winged creatures and befriend the invalid. Later, when unfulfilled breeding instincts force them to steal does from a rival tribe, the bird becomes an ally, providing crucial reconnaissance during their raid.

This military adventure, which comprises the book's second half, makes clear, as Adams has said, that he modeled his rabbits on old army buddies. Discussions of strategy dominate the dialogue, and the action is full of what Napoleon dubs, in one of the epigraphs that introduce each chapter, "*le courage de l'improviste*." The raided warren is a garrison state established by a rabbit named General Woundwort to protect his horde. But the heroes vanquish him in a rousing scene, featuring paw-to-paw combat, that cuts among various phases of the action like a well edited war movie.

All this establishes the book as a "good read" for older children and those adults who are nostalgic for heroes and adventure. Modern literature is notoriously lacking in these, which is perhaps why serious readers sometimes indulge themselves in spy stories, detective novels, science fiction—the literary equivalent of lollipops. Since *Watership Down*, which makes no claim to deal with human life and hence doesn't belie it, is arguably less puerile than such debased survivals of epic tradition, one can perhaps understand what impels Macmillan to market the book in America not as a children's story but simply as "a novel."

But how to explain the dimensions of the campaign in behalf of this clever little saga? The initial 75,000-copy printing, $13,000 ad budget and endorsements of pundits like Bruno Bettleheim and Buckminster Fuller suggest more than confidence in a sturdy tale. Do the publishers think they have another *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* on their hands: an animal story susceptible to reading as a self-help book? Certain elements in the text bear out this suspicion.

To begin with there are the epigraphs, culled from important adult literature, which remind us that similar events have been recounted about humans. Moreover the rabbits are given a stock of legends—about a heroic likeness named El-ahrairah, a sun god named Frith, and the Black Rabbit of Inlé—that invites speculation on the role of tradition in any pattern of behavior. Such devices constitute a gentle appeal to analogical reasoning, and although Adams, who is an environmentalist by profession, emphasizes specifically animal behavior and makes his rabbits too individual for allegory, he does occasionally seem to be sending us a message.

Fiver, the visionary rabbit who makes the call to migration, does so after seeing some "freshly disturbed" ground, "heavy posts, reeking of creosote and paint," and a sign board that "threw a long shadow across the top of the field." Illiterate, he cannot fully comprehend the source of his troubled dreams, but Adams lets us read it: "THIS IDEALLY SITUATED ESTATE, COMPRISING SIX ACRES OF EXCELLENT BUILDING LAND, IS TO BE DEVELOPED WITH HIGH CLASS MODERN RESIDENCES

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BY SUTCH AND MARTIN, LIMITED, OF NEWBURY, BERKS." For emphasis, the cited chapter is also introduced by an epigraph from *Agamemnon* in which Cassandra is foreseeing the destruction of the House of Atreus. Readers so inclined may therefore take the migrating rabbits, who set up a kind of commune, as fugitives from a deteriorating civilization. Then the other rabbit groups in the book can be regarded as examples of improper responses to the environmental threat.

This interpretation is perhaps most encouraged in the first quarter of the novel, when the heroes encounter rabbits who have been turned into bunnies. Believing that sufficient food and guaranteed freedom from predators will cause animals to lose their instinctive resistance to snares, a farmer has cunningly bred a strain of complacent candidates for slaughter. Several of the protagonists think to settle down in this "peaceful" warren, until they are once more saved by their far-seeing comrade. During this episode a particularly good storyteller in the heroes' group tells a tale about El-ahrairah, to which his hosts respond not with expected enthusiasm but with decadent toleration. "I always think these traditional stories retain a lot of charm," one of them fussily remarks, "especially when they're told in the real, old-fashioned spirit." *Their* taste, it turns out, runs to verses full of necrophiliac stoicism. Upon hearing these, Fiver knows his friends have fallen into a nest of weaklings and convinces the stalwarts to depart. When Adams remarks that in "one respect . . . rabbits' lives are less complicated than those of humans . . . they are not ashamed to use force," we detect a note of regret.

Resistance, we infer, is necessary for survival. General Woundwort's dictatorship is judged less desirable than the heroes' democratic arrangements, but even his militancy is preferred to stoicism or, as another episode implies, to the tameness of hutch-rabbits. And the general is not presented as a villain but rather as an "extraordinary rabbit" who simply went too far in his legitimate dependence on power.

"Men will never rest," a hero says, "till they've spoiled the earth and destroyed the animals." Among the pleasures offered by Adams' book is the implication that some of man's victims are clever enough to keep us from getting away with it, and that we might even learn from them something about escaping the beastliness ourselves. But it scarcely needs pointing out that rabbits, unlike men, live in a world where harsh threats are also simple ones and hence amenable to simple physical solutions. So it is discomfiting to read Fuller's praise for the book ("one of those great ones that every once in a while lets us know that the universe has something really mysteriously great 'going' for humanity"). Or to learn that the same firm that broke records for the privilege of reprinting *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* and *I'm OK—You're OK* has already offered a recordbreaking sum—pre-publication—to get *Watership Down* into paperback. It would be a pity if Adams' *tour de force* were taken as a wish-fulfilling fable for ecologists.

Charles Thomas Samuels

Open Spaces

FLO, A Biography of Frederick Law Olmsted by Laura Wood Roper

(Johns Hopkins University Press; $15)

Inevitably one begins reading a biography of America's pioneer landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, with the focus of today's enthusiasm for his "country parks": Central Park and Prospect Park in New York, Belle Isle in Detroit, the Arnold Arboretum and Franklin Park in Boston, to name a few. Such places are not only some of the few still functioning amenities of the 19th-century city but also, on a warm Sunday in the spring, they testify to a happy coexistence of middle-class family life, youthful lower-class boisterousness, a successful balance of policemen, fencing and open spaces, privacy and unlimited access, which seems a tantalizing model for our spread and segregated metropolis. On such a day the designer's voice can be heard speaking to us all, "We want, especially, the greatest possible contrast with the restraining and confining conditions of the town, those conditions which compel us to walk circumspectly, watchfully, jealously, which compel us to look closely upon others without sympathy."

Among the many rewards of Ms. Roper's book is its revelation of the

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complex elements that combined to build these special places. Olmsted himself lacked an analysis of the historical forces at work beyond a sense that he was participating in a worldwide "common spontaneous movement." Today it is clear that the park movement came to the Atlantic world at that moment when cities were growing so large that the ordinary citizen could no longer get out of them on a Sunday. Since most city dwellers in the 19th century were former country folk, access to the symbols of the country was an issue of great popular moment.

Olmsted was also a fine artist and his parks not only gave the public the pastoral spaces it longed for, he gave it *his* landscape. His skill, as J.B. Jackson has pointed out, was to remake the rough lands on the edges of our cities into scenes resembling the pre-Civil War Connecticut countryside of Olmsted's experience.

Yet for all the parks' charm, there has always seemed to me to be something grandmotherly about a walk in Central Park. The popular consent to the genteel promenade or decorous picnic mystified me as a child, and later puzzled me when as a historian I became aware of the boisterous side of 19th-century America. As Roper's biography unfolded the details of Olmsted's life I became increasingly conscious of the insistent presence of sickness and death in commonplace domestic life of the past century. Olmsted lost his mother, brothers and sisters in his childhood, his closest friend, his brother John, in his youth, and was himself intermittently seriously ill throughout his long life. A country park in the city therefore not only embodied current sentimental attitudes toward nature, but it also was a place for the simple, deep and compelling experience of health. To picnic on the lawn, to bask in the sun, to follow the winding path carried stronger meanings than today because the park was the refuge for families continually facing sickness and death, families exposed to recurrent epidemics, families fighting coal smoke, leaky gas, ever-present dirt and the stink of bad plumbing and horse manure.

In the end Roper shows us that the conditions under which the parks came forth were unique to their age and that neither in mode of organization nor esthetic are these antiques models for the present planning of the city. We approach parks in automobiles; we seek contrast to our planted suburbs, not more gardened spaces; the conflicts and possibilities of our metropolitan bureaucracies are not those of Olmsted's days of gentlemen, speculators and bosses; our sports and machine modes of recreation cannot be contained by even the best organized city park. We are escaping a different city; we are in search of a different Mother Nature.

Yet who are we? what is our city? and what is our nature? Roper's careful scholarship and writing offer us a fine mirror of the past, a complex, energetic, highly relevant life in whose images we can perfect our own consciousness. The Olmsted biography is about a drifting boy and an indulgent father, an aristocratic youth with direct experience and serious interest in farming, frequent failure in business, a moderate on slavery who wound up shipping arms to Kansas farmers, a clubman and ardent nationalist whose old-boy network enabled his group to build the Sanitary Commission to fill great gaps in the ill-organized federal government of the Civil War, an elite reformer of the masses who thought of himself as a democrat and even acted as a democratic leader, because he compared his democracy to the monarchy of Europe, a founder of a family business, a builder of upper-middle-class suburbs and a practitioner of the newly relaxed patriarchal domestic style that flourished among such suburbanites, a brilliant designer and his projects. Altogether Roper has written a definitive biography and given us the pleasure of a long thoughtful book in which we can explore our own ecological understanding.

Sam Bass Warner, Jr.

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Notes on Contributors

David Littlejohn *teaches at the University of California, Berkeley and has written six books, most recently two on André Gide.* Stanley Weintraub *is the author of the recent biography,* Whistler *(Weybright).* Sam Bass Warner, Jr., *is an urban historian and professor of history and social science at Boston University.* Charles T. Samuels *is a professor of English at Williams College.* William Crawford Woods *is a free-lance writer who lives in Washington, DC.*

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William Crawford Woods on TV

On November 21, 1972 Maude, of *Maude*, became the first character on a national television series to have an abortion, a choice which doubtless curled Birthright bumper stickers all across the country. In an earlier climate such a move would have been unthinkable; the networks are not noted for their swift embrace of controversial causes. But three years before, an organization called the Population Institute had come into being, and had set patiently to work to sensitize viewers to the population problem. If Maude's abortion was not a direct result of the institute's efforts, it seems unlikely she would have thought to have it without the institute's help.

At first glance, population control scarcely looks like a daring topic. Most human ills can ultimately be traced to too many humans. But the big three networks are jealous guardians of their private monopoly on the public airwaves, and ideas that might make even the smallest bubble in the custard are sniffed closely for signs of plague. Then too, the networks are leery of pressure groups and special pleading, so it's a measure of the Population Institute's success that its representatives are welcome in executive suites from New York to the Coast. Much credit probably belongs to director Peter Cott, who did a stint as head of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, and who has developed a low-key approach to his old colleagues that seems to be bearing fruit: population issues are now among the few social questions that program-practices departments approach with something less than mortal fear.

PI of course plies program-makers with—I use the word in its neutral sense—propaganda for its cause. But it also functions as a creative resource, suggesting specific story lines and plot ideas that grow from the genuine alarming drama of the population problem. And this approach in turn stems from a realistic sense of where TV packs its punch.

Viewers stay away from documentaries in droves; to put one's message in a "serious" program is to preach to an empty room. But worked cleverly into the context of a popular series, issues get their airing. Thus the institute properly leans more on networks than on local stations, less on public than on commercial broadcasters, reaches as many people as possible to tell them there are too many of them.

"Taking sides has not been the point," notes one PI bulletin, "but raising the issues for effective drama has . . . the American public is eager to exercise their thought on the vital debates of our time." Apparently the institute is developing effectiveness in urging broadcasters to give them a chance to do so.

(Still Cott is disappointed with the results of the present season. PI—which gives regular awards to writers, producers and programs that best dramatize the problem—will present none this year. But some producers brag of negative accomplishments: pro-childbearing scripts that never got made.)

Quantifiable results are hard to come by, but the institute monitors the tube closely and reports—in addition to the increased frequency of appearance of its spokesmen on top talk shows and occasional prime-time breakthroughs like Maude's—a distinct drop in the number of pregnancies on daytime TV.

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eras have historically been TV's safest harbor of conservative social thinking, with the glorification of multiple motherhood a soapy staple. (Paradoxically they have also generally been well ahead of prime time in focusing on controversial material—but always on the side of a Mary Worth morality.) It remains to be seen whether Maude's abortion will strike a sympathetic chord with the harassed ladies of the afternoon.

Meanwhile the evening hours continue to give with one hand and take with the other with vexing regularity: any blow for ZPG runs head-on into shows like "The Waltons," a much-praised series about a Depression-era family that meets the threat of starvation by happily producing numerous new mouths to feed. This is what Cott calls "bad nostalgia," and TV is full of it.

There are other problems. A part of black radical thinking in the '60s held that population control could be a form of benign genocide directed at American blacks. A Hassidic notion holds that Jews should reproduce freely to replenish the void left by the Nazi holocaust. Some Christian churches still waffle on birth control and many Catholics continue to oppose it. Remnants of the counterculture joy in child-filled communes, and the *macho* requirements of Latin fathers, still hold strong sway. There are folks left who want to fill the future so their own progeny will have an equal share in the degenerating quality of life, plenty of people who think they need more people for something.

"*Nobody*," Cott says, "needs more people for *anything*."

It's true that the American population isn't swelling at present, except in unmarried teenage births, one of the primary targets of the institute's concern. But Cott points out that each of our citizens uses up a disproportionate share of the world's commodities. Meanwhile the world is pretty much popping at the seams, so the institute's attentions run worldwide.

Interestingly Cott has found that religious/missionary broadcasters operate the largest radio networks in the Third World, centered in the two most powerful transmitters on earth. PI has succeeded in arranging for an association of these broadcasters to feature population problems in its programming for this year. On dramatic and didactic shows, in explicit and subtle ways, the idea of birth control will be instilled, though not any specific form of it—a delicate question left to local mores. Cott is sanguine about this effort, less so about official ones. "The government thinks it can solve the population problem by airdropping condoms—preferably red, white and blue condoms—all over the world."

The Population Institute settles for dropping its message: "The mass media of information and entertainment are crucial to development of sufficient understanding soon enough to save us and the globe from unexampled horrors of overcrowding . . . the media face a heavy challenge and opportunity. Literally, they can save the world."

A nice carrot, and a very heavy stick.

Fine Print

Doris Grumbach

It may be that, like so many others, I am not immune to the nostalgia binges that both the theater and the films have recently been indulging in. Eric Sloane's books, some of which Ballantine has been reissuing for some time, make me ache for life in the early American days. The first two I came across, **A Museum of Early American Tools** and **A Reverence for Wood** (each $2), are models of beautiful bookmaking in paperback. Sloane lives on a farm in Connecticut, is a painter and pen-and-ink artist of great skill, was once a meteorologist (the first weatherman on TV), became interested in how much the early Americans knew about weather, and then fascinated by the tools, utensils, methods of making things, and customs surrounding life of the early settlers. No one appears to know quite as much as he about the technology of pioneer builders and farmers, no one makes books so appetizing that one yearns to take up the tools described and illustrated (even, I might add, *make* them) and go to work on the wood he describes and draws.

Until this latest reissue, **An Age of Barns** (Ballantine; $4.95), my favorite among Sloane's books was the one he did for young people, **Diary of an Early American Boy** (also Ballantine; $2). Here he takes a journal that he came upon by accident, kept by 15-year-old Noah Blake whose New England farm is a prototype for all the farms, and he for all the boys of his age, growing and working hard and planning for the future in 1805. Never that I can recall has such ordinary life been re-created so vividly and, I would guess, so authentically. This is one of those books you buy for your teenaged offspring and then read avidly yourself.

An Age of Barns is just reissued in a gift-book edition. It is a more ambitious work, a sketchbook, with the addition of some highly colored but still pleasing paintings of characteristic barns. This lovely volume has an interesting subplot. Besides showing barns in Pennsylvania, Vermont, Connecticut, New York, each with its special architectural signs, Sloane enters a plea for "the education of sight—the art of vision," which he says is not being given proper attention today. To cultivate this art is to understand the delights of "pleasing decay." He thinks old barns are like the ruins of Greece and Rome; in need of repair they still provide standards for architectural beauty. The beauty of wood, celebrated in the earlier book, becomes part of this consideration, as well as a sense of the past and a sense of continuity: "America has no noble ruins," writes Sloane, "for the old houses are torn down to make way for the new. But fortunately some of the old barns still remain—the only structures that are allowed the dignity of pleasing decay."

I must have been mad or blind or ignorant to have missed, when it first appeared in 1965, **Criers & Kibitzers, Kibitzers & Criers** by Stanley Elkin. But no matter. I've now caught up with him, in a Plume Books reprint (New American Library; $3.95 paper), and I've spent days reading (and rereading some) these superb stories. One I've read three or four times, "A Poetics for Bullies," which comes as close to running, colloquial, irresistible poetry as anything I've ever read. To be able to sustain a teenaged first-person narrative like this which convinces completely and yet pleases by the beauty of its prose is a major achievement. In that much-maligned and often-neglected genre the short story, there are indeed still some giants in the English language, and I now count Elkin among them.

I am a constant reader of literary letters. Last year I went through the letters of

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Anton Chekhov with great interest, and now Harvard University Press is making available the **Letters of Byron,** the 150th anniversary of whose death will be noted in April. About a sixth of the known letters of Byron have never been published; now they will be, beginning with Volume 1, called "In My Hot Youth," and Volume 2, "Famous in my Time," both edited by Leslie Marchand (each $11.50). Expect at least six volumes like these first exhilarating two, which make the poet seem alive, lively, human, self-revealing, worldly and at the same time boyish, exultant, moody. The good thing about these books is that they are not so heavily laden with scholarly information and paraphernalia that the general reader will be frightened off. You will find you can read them for the simple pleasure of knowing more about a poet whose voice in his prose is fine to discover.

I have just acquired a new-fiction correspondent who promises me short, (and, you will note, deft) reviews of recent fiction and who is clearly not one to pull her critical punches. I will from time to time print her comments signed with her initials (RB) in this space, and begin with this issue:

Just completed reading three novels. The first, by Dolores Pala, **Trumpet for a Walled City** (Harper & Row; $7.95), is an artificial, protracted love affair between two persons who mistake attitudes for emotions. A sudden nervous breakdown causes them to "look into each others eyes and discover new treasures." Ending: happy.

The second, **Images of Rose** by Anna Gilbert (Delacorte Press; $6.95) is a Victorian melodrama reminiscent of DuMaurier's *Rebecca:* whispers, creaks, swamps, hagstones, mistaken identity, murderous accidents, and finally the expulsion of the evil woman. Rose does not smell like a rose. Again, happy ending: one rescued, twittering sister hitched in bucolic marriage and the other dimpling as the belle of the provincial ball.

The third should be given free to every suffering member of Weight Watchers, Inc. It is the journal of a 294-pound young man who decides to substitute the diet organization for his Jewish mother, and its calories for his compulsions. In 32 weeks he loses over 100 pounds and discovers rounded breasts, behinds and other delightful feminine parts instead of bagels. Most of his reactions are expressed in four-letter words except in the gerundive. **(Solomon's Temple** by Stanley Hoffman, Viking; $7.95.)

Note: Two correspondents have written to question my knowledge of the geography of Long Island in my review of *The Other Hampton.* Burling Lowrey points out that the interpretation of the placement of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Gatsby* at the Hamptons is "off course about 80 miles and is on the wrong side of Long Island." And Stephen Hansen tells me that "Nick [Carraway] could never have commuted to his bond firm on Wall Street . . . if the trip originated in the Hamptons some 100 miles away." Both writers correctly suggest that FSF was talking about the *other* side of the island, possibly Great Neck where he lived for some time, or Glen Cove, or the other Gold Coast cities like Manhasset and Port Washington.

Both are correct, of course. In trying to condense I failed to point out that the suggestion made in a number of critical sources was that FSF chose the *names* East and West Egg to suggest in sound the Ham of Hampton, and that was all. A poor suggestion probably, but there you are.

Kauffmann, *from page 24*

born filmmaker who is overwhelmingly gifted, who is developing a style of his own—lean, harsh and contemporary, yet streaked, almost nostalgically, with the Italianate. Bellocchio does not woo or seduce us or try to squeeze emotion out of us like milk from a teat. He strikes us across the face with the "facts" of his film, somewhat in the manner of Brecht's epic theater. We are deliberately distanced by a hand that *holds* us at that distance. He is not, or not yet, a sure master, but he is the best Italian director of his (mid-'30s) generation that I know.

I feel sorry for Lucille Ball. I've always liked her—what is there to dislike?—but, now a woman of 63, she appears in the title role of *Mame* as a purportedly attractive woman of, say, 35. If she had made this film 15 years ago, she would have been terrific. But she is now too thick in the waist, too stringy in the legs, too basso in the voice, and too creaky in the joints. She spends a good deal of her time in her profile shots lifting her chin high to avoid you-know-what, and in her solo full-face shots they pour soft-focus all over her. None of it helps.

And the man she marries, who is supposed to be taking her under his mature wing, is Robert Preston, himself nearly ready for the rocking-chair (in appearance) and yet seven years her junior. This film is a Geritol Special.

It was made from the Broadway musical, based on a previous film and play, based on the novel by Patrick Dennis. Jerry Herman wrote the music and lyrics which are now familiar; but many of the songs sounded familiar when they were new. Gene Saks, who pushed the Broadway show along, does the same here, rather better. Onna White again does the dances and uses one routine I never expected to see again: Mame walks toward us between two rows of men who kneel and take off their top hats as she passes. But if Ball were younger, there would still be some fun in the whole contraption.

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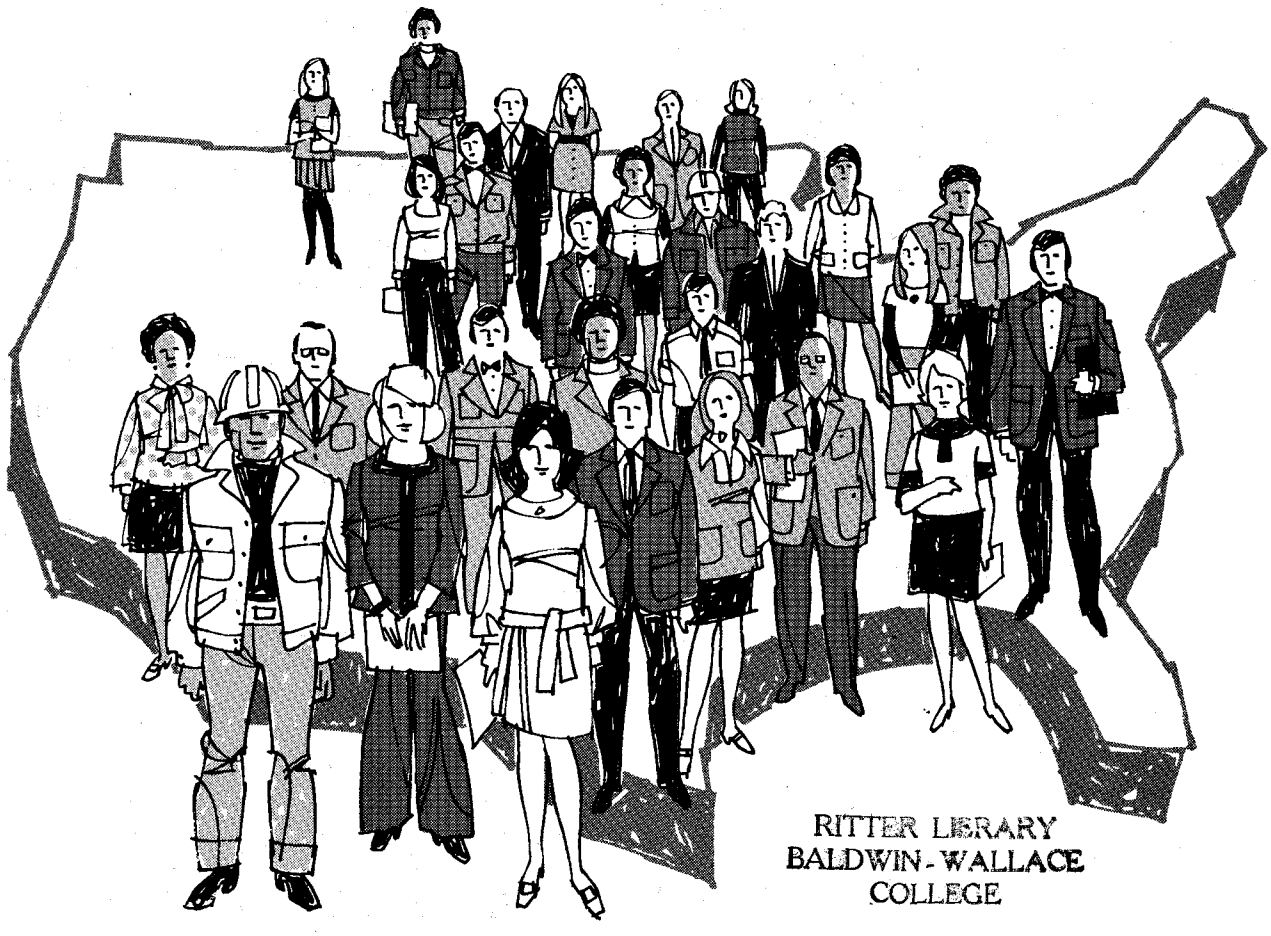

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